

O ADVENTO DE CONAN!

m 1970, o roteirista Roy Thomas e o artista Barry Windsor-Smith combinaram o estilo visual da Marvel com o poder implacável da prosa de Robert E. Howard. Dessa alquimia veio Conan, o Bárbaro, um inovador e premiado tour de force narrativo que arrebatou a imaginação dos leitores por todo o mundo. Nesta coleção — meticulosamente restaurada com a colorização original — a Marvel Comics apresenta os anos seminais de Conan, o Bárbaro.

Então, venha conosco à Era Hiboriana, de volta aos séculos sombrios, onde, nascido no sangrento campo de batalha da fria nação da Ciméria, a jornada de Conan começa. Conan é um homem sem ligação com qualquer nação, qualquer homem, e Conan há de conquistar! Sua jornada épica — de bárbaro a ladrão, de mercenário a soldado e, finalmente, rei – é uma saga mais ousada do que qualquer outra já concebida. Capturado nessas histórias mais antigas, muitas adaptadas das histórias e poemas de Howard da década de 1930, Thomas e Windsor-Smith (então creditado como Barry Smith) introduziram de forma impressionante o personagem e seu mundo, visualizando uma civilização destruída pelo naufrágio da Atlântida e cercada por todos os lados por selvagens ferozes, feras assustadoras, espadachins habilidosos e mulheres traiçoeiras.

Com os roteiros afiados de Thomas e a elegância lírica da arte de Windsor-Smith, as mitologias pulp dos contos de Howard ganharam vida: histórias como A Torre do Elefante e Inimigos em Casa demonstram a escala dos perigos sobrenaturais de Conan, com ameaças na forma de homens-serpente rastejantes e touros de dimensões divinas. O verdadeiro perigo, porém, está na humanidade sórdida que atravessa o caminho do herói bárbaro. Mas para toda sedutora traiçoeira ou feiticeiro maligno, também há irmãos de armas — incluindo o companheiro guerreiro Fafnir e a estreia cintilante de Sonja.

Depois de 24 edições (interrompidas apenas por duas edições com Gil Kane), Windsor-Smith entregou o título a John Buscema, que com a orientação contínua de Roy Thomas levaria Conan, o Bárbaro por uma década de crescente popularidade e visuais inovadores.

Além de coletar a série inaugural de Conon, o Bárbaro, esta coleção também apresenta o primeiro conto de espada & magia de Thomas e Windsor-Smith, publicado em Chamber of Darkness 4, e as versões originais não editadas de A Filha do Gigante de Gelo e O Habitante das Trevas, de Savage Tales, além das versões coloridas editadas pelo Comics Code. Com uma horda de esboços raros, arte, capas e muito mais, de graças a Crom, pois esta é a coleção de Conan que você sempre sonhoul





A ERA MARVEL

VOLUME 1

ROY THOMAS · BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH

MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT:

Editor Original da Coleção - Cory SedImeier Design do Livro - Rodolfo Muraguchi

Restauração de Arte & Cores - Michael Kelleher & Kellustration

Vice-Presidente Sénior de Vendas Impressas e Marketing - David Gabriel

Editor-Chefe Original - C.B. Cebulski

Presidente Criativo - Joe Quesada

Presidente - Dan Buckley

Produtor Executivo - Alan Fine

CONAN PROPERTIES INTERNATIONAL:

Presidente - Fredrik Malmberg Vice-Presidente Executivo - Joakim Zetterberg Gerente de Operações - Steve Booth



AGRADECIMENTOS ESPECIAIS:

Nick Caputo, Steve Englehart, Steve Kriozere, F.H. Navarro, Paul Shiple, Roy Thomas & Dr. Michael J. Vassasllo.



Este volume reúne uma miríade de conteúdos extras inéditos no Brasil relacionados à primeira era da Marvel de Conan, o Bárbaro, a qual iniciou em 1970 e terminou mais de vinte anos depois. Ao navegar por esta obra, o leitor notará que cerca de um terço é composto por artigos e imagens raras nunca antes vistas, verdadeiras joias recuperadas das primeiras edições (e não só) dos quadrinhos de Conan. Boa parte deste conteúdo foi traduzido para o português, mas alguns, devido a uma precisa escolha editorial, foram deixados em inglês. Nos casos em que não teria sido possível intervir sem afetar as imagens originais, preferiu-se não alterar o material, a fim de preservar a qualidade original da primeira edição. Boa leitura.

EQUIPE EDITORIAL PANINI COMICS

Dados Internacionais de Catalogação na Publicação (CIP) (Ana Lúcia Merege 4987/CR8-7)

Thomas, Roy

Coren, o bárbaro : a Era Marvel : vol. 1 / roteiro por Roy Thomas; arte per Barry Windsor-Smith; tradução por Jotapê Martins. – Barueri, SP : Panini Brasil, 2020.

ISBN 978-65-5512-013-4 (Capa dura)

 Histórias em quadrinhos I. Windsor-Smith, Barry II. Martins, Jotapé III. Título

000 741.5

Índice para catálogo sistemático: 1. Histórias em quadrinhos 741.5



PANINI GROUP

Pontar de Publicação e Licenciamento: Mirco M. Lupoi Diretar de Publicações América Latina: Ivors Faria Gerente de Publicações América Latina: Leonardo Naveggi

PANINI BRASIL LTDA.

Diretor-Presidente: José Eduardo Severo Mantino Diretor Administrativo e Financeiros Fábio Trigo Mantino Diretor de Distribuição: Giberto Finoto Gil Gultor: Isabelle Felix Benigner: Marcos R. Sacchi Azcillar Administrativo: Bruna Tiemi Okubo Gerente de Marketing: Marcolo Adriano da Silva Coerdenadora de Manteting: Virginia Lima Analista de Marketing: Douglas Bettioli Coordenadora de Negóciao Digitais: Juliana Avila Coordenador de Inteligência Comercial: Radrigo Felipe Lucturano Publicidade: comencial: parini com tri Assessoria de Comunicação: Retchum - panini-Okerchum, com tri PLANCIAMENTO E CONTROLE DE PRODUÇÃO Generale Industrial: Edison Aprijo de Farias. Esta revista foi impresso gela losis Gráfica e Editora SIA. Distribuida em tedo o país por PARINI BRASIL LTDA.

PRODUÇÃO EDITORIAL MYTHOS EDITORA LTGA. Diretores: Corival Vitor Lopes e Helicio de Carnalho REDAÇÃO Editor-Chefe: Helicio de Carnalho Editor Séniori Leonardo Carnargo Assistente Editorial: Sabriel Faria Editor de Arte: Julio C. Noguelos Arte: Celso Pimentel, Daniel Fantini, Fernando Chakur e Wesley Soura Coordenador de Produção: Alton Alpie Revisão: Fati Gomes e Pracila Olivera.

MARVEL OMNIBUS: COMAN O BÁRBARO - A ERA MARVEL VOL. 1 é uma publicação da Pariani Brasil Lista. CMU 58.732.056/0001-00. Inscrição Estadual 206.183.400.112. Alameda Calapós, 425 — Centro Empresarial Tambori. CEP 06460-110 — Banuari - SP — Brasil. Redução a Correspondincia: Av. São Gualter, 1256 - São Paulo - SP - Brasil. CEP 06455-002. Fose/fax: (11) 3024-7707. Lanquamento: 2000. O 2019 Conan Properties International LLC (*CPI*). COMAN. COMAN THE BARBARIAN, THE SAVABE SWORD OF COMAN. HYDORIA, and all other prominent characters featured in this issue, and their related logos, names, and literaceses are trademarks or registered trademarks of CPI. All rights reserved. Marvell and its logos are TM Marvel Characters, Inc. 540/86/178001







O BÁRBARO

A ERA MARVEL

VOLUME 1

CHAMBER OF DARKNESS 4,
CONAN THE BARBARIAN 1-26 E SAVAGE TALES 1 & 4

ROY THOMAS

(Chamber of Darkness 4, Conan the Barbarian 1-26, Savage Tales 1, 4)

COM

JOHN JAKES (13)
MICHAEL MOORCOCK (14-15)
JAMES CAWTHORN (14-15)
BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH (25)

ARTE

BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH

(Chamber of Darkness 4, Conan the Barbarian 1-16, 19-24, Savage Tales 1, 4)

COM

GIL KANE (12, 17-18)
SAL BUSCEMA (23)
JOHN BUSCEMA (25-26)

ARTE-FINAL

BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH

(Chamber of Darkness 4, Conan the Barbarian 12, 15-16, 22, 24, Savage Tales 1, 4)

DAN ADKINS (1, 7, 18-21, 23)

SAL BUSCEMA (2-4, 6-7, 9-11, 13-15, 21, 23, 25)

FRANK GIACOIA (5)

TOM SUTTON (8)

TOM PALMER (8, 12)

GIL KANE (12)

BERNIE WRIGHTSON (12)

RALPH REESE (17)

P. CRAIG RUSSELL (21)

VAL MAYERIK (21)

CHIC STONE (23)

JOHN SEVERIN (25)

ERNIE CHAN (26)

CORES

MIMI GOLD (2-5, 7-13) STAN GOLDBERG (6) BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH (9-16, 19-20, 24) GEORGE ROUSSOS (21) MARIE SEVERIN (25)
GLYNIS WEIN (26)
NÃO CREDITADO (Chamber of Darkness 4,
Conan the Barbarian 1, 17-18, 22-23)

EDITORES ORIGINAIS

STAN LEE (Chamber of Darkness 4, Conan the Barbarian 1-17, Savage Tales 1)
ROY THOMAS (Conan the Barbarian 18-26, Savage Tales 4)

TRADUÇÃO

FERNANDO BERTACCHINI (Conan the Barbarian 1-26, Savage Tales 1 & 4) com

CARLO TESSANDRO (Conan the Barbarian 1-8) e JOTAPÉ MARTINS (Conan the Barbarian 9-21, Savage Tales 1 & 4)

DIOGO PRADO (Conan the Barbarian 12 - "O Sangue do Dragão", Chamber of Darkness 4)

ADAPTAÇÃO

LEONARDO "KITSUNE" CAMARGO com DIOGO PRADO

LETRAS

JULIO NOGUEIRA

EDIÇÃO

LEONARDO "KITSUNE" CAMARGO com JULIO NOGUEIRA

CONAN CRIADO POR ROBERT E. HOWARD

ÍNDICE

NTRODUÇÃO	
Por Roy Thomas	. 10
CHAMBER OF DARKNESS #4, ABRIL 1970	
"A Espada e os Feiticeiros!"	. 24
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1, OUTUBRO 1970	
"O Advento de Conan!"	. 32
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #2, DEZEMBRO 1970	
"O Covil dos Homens-Feras!"	. 54
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #3, FEVEREIRO 1971	
"O Crepúsculo do Deus Cinzento!"	. 76
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #4, ABRIL 1971	
"A Torre do Elefante!"	. 98
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #5, MAIO 1971	
"A Filha de Zukala"	. 120
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #6, JUNHO 1971	
"Asas Demoníacas sobre Shadizar"	. 142
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #7, JULHO 1971	
"O Deus na Urna"	. 164
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #8, AGOSTO 1971	1000
"Os Guardiões da Tumba"	. 186
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #9, SETEMBRO 1971	
"O Jardim do Medo"	208
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #10, OUTUBRO 1971	
"A Ira de Anul"	230
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #11, NOVEMBRO 1971	
"Inimigos em Casa"	256
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #12, DEZEMBRO 1971	
"O Habitante das Trevas"	294
"O Sangue do Dragão!"	
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #13, JANEIRO 1972	
"Na Teia do Deus-Aranha"	318
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #14, MARÇO 1972	
"Uma Espada Chamada Stormbringer!"	342
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #15, MAIO 1972	342
"A Imperatriz Verde de Melniboné"	266
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #16, JULHO 1972	300
	200
•	390
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #17, AGOSTO 1972	
"Os Deuses de Bal-Sagoth"	. 406
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #18, SETEMBRO 1972	
"A Coisa no Templo!"	428
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #19, OUTUBRO 1972	
"Gaviŏes do Mar!"	450
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #20, NOVEMBRO 1972	
"O Cão Negro da Vingança!"	. 472
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #21, DEZEMBRO 1972	
"O Monstro dos Monólitos!"	. 494
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #22, JANEIRO 1973	
"Pin-Up Especial Hiboriano!"	. 516
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #23, FEVEREIRO 1973	
"A Sombra do Abutre!"	. 520
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #24, MARÇO 1973	
"A Canção da Guerreira Sonja"	. 542





CONAN THE BARBARIAN #25, ABRIL 1973	
"Os Espelhos de Kharam-Akkad"	564
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #26, MAIO 1973	
"O Momento do Grifol"	586
SAVAGE TALES #1, MAIO 1971	
"A Filha do Gigante de Gelo"	608
SAVAGE TALES #4, MAIO 1974	
"O Habitante das Trevas"	624



INTRODUÇÃO

Tradução de Tadeu Ferreira

Conan meio que se arrastou para a minha vida — e para a da Marvel Comics.

Não me lembro de saber nada sobre o personagem antes de um dia em Manhattan, em 1966, quando comprei um novo livro com o título Conan, the Adventurer. Bem, na verdade, desconfio que a primeira coisa que notei não foi o título, mas a dramática pintura de capa de Frank Frazetta, que retratava um guerreiro musculoso, de aspecto sisudo, cabelos longos, quase nu, apoiado em sua espada, de pé no topo de uma provável montanha de cadáveres e crânios, enquanto uma mulher igualmente pouco vestida se agarrava a uma de suas pernas musculosas, para proteção ou por pura exaustão. Crânios flutuavam atrás dele, no céu ao fundo.

Era um retrato de certa forma triunfante e revigorante do masculino e do feminino, em meio a um retrato de morte violenta.

Reconheci o trabalho de Frazetta de capas de livros anteriores com reimpressões dos romances de Edgar Rice Burroughs e do quadrinho de terror em preto e branco Creepy. Na verdade, eu até me lembrei de seu trabalho em quadrinhos da década de 1950 na EC e em séries como White Indian e Thun'da (um clone de Tarzan) e em algumas capas de uma história em quadrinhos da Western chamada Ghost Rider. Ele



era claramente um grande artista de fantasia, melhorando a passos largos.

Então, quem era esse tal de "Conan" anunciado no livro? Eu vi que foi anunciado como "Volume Um da Coleção Completa do Conan", logo ele era claramente um personagem recorrente como Tarzan e Doc Savage, também fazendo sucesso nas prateleiras de romances da época. Estranhamente, o livro parecia ter não um só autor, mas dois: Robert E. Howard e L. Sprague de Camp. Reconheci o segundo nome como o de um escritor de ficção científica, mas o outro nome não me lembrou nada. Virando o livro, li uma referência da contracapa a "Atlântida". Imediatamente, imaginei que este livro era mais uma das imitações de John Carter of Mars ou de Pellucidar ou de Land That Time Forgot, de Edgar Rice Burroughs, que vinham surgindo nos últimos anos. Um herói dinâmico e ousado em algum mundo perdido que provavelmente usou sua pesada espada para cortar armas laser ao meio.

Comprei o livro.

De volta ao meu apartamento, comecei a ler. Fiquei surpreso ao descobrir que a brochura era uma coleção de quatro contos, não um romance completo. Comecei o primeiro, "Povo do Círculo Negro", mas logo percebi que essa história era consideravelmente mais "terrestre" do que a usual cópia de John Carter. Tratava-se de uma princesa em alguma área usada como referência à antiga Índia, embora aqui fosse chamada Vendhya. Esse tal de Conan simplesmente escala as paredes do palácio, joga a princesa por cima do seu ombro musculoso e a leva noite adentro, a fim de usá-la como moeda de troca para obter a libertação de alguns de seus lacaios que estão definhando na masmorra dela. Porém, algum feiticeiro tem uma ideia diferente e envia fumos venenosos que matam os lacaios, para que não possam ser trocados por carne da realeza.

A escrita parecia ótima, mas não era o tipo de história que eu esperava quando desembolsei meus 60 centavos, então coloquei o livro na minha estante, no meio de todos os livros do Burroughs e suas cópias, e prontamente o esqueci.

Pula para mais ou menos três anos depois. Durante esse período, peguei vários outros livros do Conan por conta das capas de Frazetta, nem sempre chegando a me dar ao trabalho de abri-los antes de colocá-los na minha estante. Pelo caminho, porém, eu li uma ou duas das onipresentes introduções do mencionado de Camp, então eu descobri que o Conan era algo chamado "bárbaro", vivendo pela espada em uma terra perdida para nós nas névoas obscuras do tempo... uma era pré-histórica fictícia da Terra chamada de "Era Hiboriana". Conan tinha história, tendo nascido na revista pulp dos anos 30 Weird Tales... não era uma linhagem tão longa quanto Tarzan, mas era próximo. O gênero em que ele aparecia tinha um nome: espada & magia. Também descobri que Howard havia escrito todas as histórias de Conan entre 1932 e 1936 — e depois se suicidou à tenra idade de 30 anos, talvez devido a um apego excessivo à mãe em estado terminal (pelo menos, era a interpretação de L. Sprague de Camp).

Nesse ínterim, até acabei lendo um romance não totalmente diferente chamado Thongor in the City of Magicians, que exibia uma capa do Frazetta que eu gostava ainda mais do que as do Conan. Ela apresentava um herói do tipo "bárbaro", usando um capacete alado que ele pode ter tirado direto do Thor da Marvel, montando um enorme pterodátilo acima dos brilhantes riachos vermelhos de lava que fluíam entre abismos de escuridão. É provável que a ilustração da capa tenha me ajudado a terminar o livro, que o autor Lin Carter — um nome que eu conhecia de um fanzine de ficção científica do início dos anos 60 chamado Xero — tinha aparentemente criado com dois terços de Conan e um toque de John Carter. (Talvez não por coincidência, eu descobri, Carter também estava coescrevendo algumas histórias novas de Conan com

de Camp, para preencher as lacunas nos eventos entre as histórias de Robert E. Howard. Ao que parece, não havia inventário suficiente da década de 1930 para satisfazer o mercado de romances da época... ou algo assim.) Eu estava começando a entender esse gênero de "espada & magia"... mas não era realmente pro meu gosto. Eu preferia os super-heróis que estava escrevendo: Os Vingadores... Os X-Men... O Incrivel Hulk. Não havia nada para mim, ou para a Marvel, em Conan e sua laia.

Mas cabeças mais jovens e mais sábias tinham ideias melhores.

Na verdade, leitores de todas as idades escreviam cartas para a Marvel — o que significava, basicamente, cartas para o editor e roteirista Stan Lee, meu chefe e mentor dizendo que deveríamos adquirir os direitos de um herói de espada & magia, ou o Conan ou algum parecido. (Eles também nos pediam, em igual volume, para licenciar as obras de Edgar Rice Burroughs e J.R.R. Tolkien e do herói pulp Doc Savage.)

Stan ouviu... e como ele repassou essas cartas para mim, eu também ouvi. Em meados de 1969, ele decidiu que deveríamos licenciar os direitos de um personagem de espada & magia... mesmo que Stan, que não tinha lido tanto do gênero como eu, tivesse apenas uma vaga noção do que isso significava. É provavelmente o motivo de ele não ter ligado para Jack Kirby ou um dos outros artistas da Marvel e criado um novo herói de espada & magia, um que a Marvel seria totalmente dona. Além disso, o pedido da maior parte das cartas era para adquirirmos esse herói, não para criar o nosso. Stan costumava dizer que os "verdadeiros editores" da Marvel eram os leitores, e acho que isso nunca foi mais verdadeiro do que neste caso.

Em vez de conversar com o editor Martin Goodman sobre o assunto, ele me pediu para escrever um memorando de 2 a 3 páginas descrevendo como seria um gibi de espada & magia e por que deveríamos licenciar um herói da literatura. Fiz o que me disseram e, aparentemente, com eloquência suficiente para que Goodman amasse meu memorando! Ele não apenas concordou que gastássemos uma quantía em dinheiro a cada edição pela licença, mas, ao longo do ano seguinte, ele me elogiou pessoalmente pelo menos duas vezes, dizendo que tinha ficado impressionado com o memorando. Me fez desejar ter guardado uma cópia (ou que ele tivesse)!

Então lá estava eu... autorizado, em nome da Marvel, a oferecer a um autor desavisado a chance de transformar seu herói de espada & magia em uma história em quadrinhos, por um pagamento fixo de 150 dólares por edição.

Heróis do gênero cujos nomes eu conhecia: Thongor... Conan... Kull... O único deles que não tinha uma capa por Frazetta era Kull, que foi criado pelo mesmo Robert E. Howard que inventou Conan, mas apareceu em histórias o suficiente apenas para um livro, com capa de outro ótimo artista, Roy Krenkel.

Stan decidiu que gostava mais do nome "Thongor"...
"Kull" em segundo. "Conan" estava mais abaixo na lista,
porque os logotipos que terminam em "r" ou que começam com "k" ficam mais bonitos do que aqueles com palavras que começavam com "c".

Eu realmente não forcei muito nenhum herói em particular porque já havia me ocorrido, como tenho certeza que ocorreu ao Stan, que, como Conan era o progenitor desse gênero, o pessoal que o representava (eu estava supondo que seria de Camp) quereria mais dinheiro do que estávamos autorizados a oferecer. Portanto, por todos esses motivos, além do fato de eu já ter de fato lido um livro de Thongor, foi decidido: a Marvel tentaria escolher o herói de pastiche de Lin Carter. (Nessa época, eu já havia lido várias histórias do Conan escritas por Howard e figuei impressionado com as intituladas "A Torre do Elefante" e "Inimigos em Casa". Eu fui lentamente percebendo que REH era ótimo, um escritor com um poderoso senso de narrativa além de um domínio não apenas da prosa pura, mas também da frase poética... mas os quadrinhos são um meio visual, e eu não tinha certeza se as virtudes de Howard fariam de um quadrinho do Conan um sucesso mais provável do que um estrelado por Thongor.)

Então, depois da minha conversa com Stan, entrei em contato com Lin, que gostava da ideia de uma HQ do Thongor e me colocou em contato com seu agente, Henry Morrison. Nesse ponto, as coisas começaram a desandar porque Morrison, compreensivelmente, pressionou fortemente por mais que 150 dólares por edição pelos direitos de Thongor. Ele também queria royalties dependendo das vendas (um pedido razoável, mas sem sem chance de funcionar com Goodman, eu sabia), ou pelo menos um pagamento por edição mais alto (idem). Morrison e eu negociamos por telefone e correio, mas não estávamos chegando a lugar algum... e fiquei frustrado com o passar das semanas sem rumo. Ele estava esperando a Marvel fazer sua oferta... e eu sabia que isso não iria acontecer.

E então, como um toque do destino, no final de 69, peguei o mais recente livro de bolso de Conan, com capa do Frazetta. Intitulado Conan of Cimmeria, mostrava o bárbaro em batalha com alguns gigantes barbudos no meio de montanhas cobertas de neve. Dessa vez, li a introdução por de Camp, muito parecida com as outras que vi, com um pouco mais de cuidado. E, quando cheguei ao fim, vi que nele havia o nome e o endereço do "agente literário da propriedade de Robert E. Howard", um Glenn Lord com caixa postal em Pasadena, Texas.

Uma lâmpada acendeu sobre minha cabeça. Se alguém joga o nome e até o endereço do agente literário da propriedade do autor principal no meu colo, talvez eu deva agir. Naquela mesma noite, datilografei uma carta para Lord, dizendo que a Marvel Comics estava interessada em fazer uma história em quadrinhos do Conan, que poderia ter a atração adicional de trazer novos leitores para os livros de bolso já populares. E, disse eu, estávamos oferecendo a gloriosa soma fixa de 200 dólares por edição para o personagem.

Sim, você leu certo. 200. Não 150, como Goodman havia autorizado especificamente como uma oferta máxima. Acho que fiquei tão envergonhado com aquela quantia insignificante que aumentei impulsivamente em um terço para Conan, sem realmente pensar muito no que havia feito.

Cerca de uma semana depois, a resposta voltou pelo correio do Texas: Glenn Lord havia aceitado a oferta da Marvel, "podem nos enviar um contrato?" Não poderíamos adaptar nenhuma história de Conan em particular — apenas usar o herói em novas histórias —, mas isso não era problema para nós. (Eu logo descobriria que já estavam mexendo pauzinhos a respeito de uma HQ do Conan antes da Marvel. Meu novo amigo e estimado artista colaborador Gil Kane queria fazer uma história em quadrinhos em preto e branco de Conan, se seu novo gibi independente His Name Is Savage fosse um sucesso — mas não foi, e essa ideia não deu em nada. E, aparentemente, o próprio Lord sugeriu um título do Conan para a Warren Publications, que publicava os quadrinhos de terror em P&B Creepy & Eerie, mas a editora não se interessou. Então, a Marvel conseguiu Conan por eliminação.)

Com um contrato simples rapidamente preparado e assinado. Stan e eu discutimos o próximo passo. Eu já tinha percebido que tinha metido os pés pelas mãos ao oferecer a Lord esses 50 dólares a mais, então, em vez de entregar as rédeas para Gerry Conway ou algum outro escritor mais jovem, como eu poderia ter feito, decidi que seria melhor escrever as primeiras edições eu mesmo. Dessa forma, se Goodman notasse que eu havia oferecido a Lord mais do que tinham me autorizado (e não havia razão para pensar que ele não o faria), eu poderia escrever duas ou três páginas da edição gratuitamente, e tudo ficaria quites.

Desses acidentes e loucuras que são feitos nossos destinos. Ok, então tínhamos o escritor, por eliminação. E Stan gostou do título que sugeri: Conan, o Bárbaro. A frase exata nunca havia sido empregada em nenhuma das histórias de Howard... mas muitas pessoas o chamavam assim de qualquer forma. E tinha sido o título de uma coleção de histórias do Conan em capa dura na década de 1950, mas não de nenhum dos novos livros de bolso, o que eliminou possíveis confusões.

Stan e eu também sabíamos quem seria o artista.

John Buscema, um dos melhores desenhistas que a indústria já conheceu.

John odiava desenhar super-heróis e nunca tinha ouvido falar de Conan, mas quando eu lhe enviei um ou dois dos livros de Howard, ele rapidamente respondeu que esse era exatamente o tipo de coisa que ele sempre quis fazer! Então comecei uma sinopse de uma história original, uma que apresentaria Conan nas regiões selvagens do extremo norte antes de enviá-lo para o sul, para um mundo de cidades civilizadas (embora antigas). De acordo com as dicas de Howard, o jovem cimério havia se aventurado com os Aesir, uma tribo de cabelos loiros ao norte de sua terra natal, contra os Vanir, um povo ruivo igualmente guerreiro, também do clima do norte. (Como os Aesir de Asgard já eram parte integrante das histórias do Thor da Marvel, então determinei que a versão em Conon seria grafada "Aesgaard". Como o leitor pronunciaria essa palavra, eu nem sabia nem me importava.)

Então, repentinamente, Martin Goodman deu a notícia de que, para podermos recuperar o dinheiro que estávamos pagando pelos direitos de Conan, teríamos que usar um de nossos desenhistas menos caros. Isso definitivamente tirou Buscema da lista. Nenhum artista ou escritor estava ficando rico com aqueles pagamentos por página, mas John era um dos mais altos da empresa. Até Gil Kane, que seria minha segunda escolha como artista, era caro demais.

Stan sugeriu que eu usasse alguns artistas talentosos com custo médio — talvez Don Heck ou Dick Ayers. Eu falei para ele que tinha um grande respeito por ambos, mas não pensava que nenhum deles era certo para Conon, o Bárbaro. Stan não me forçou a nada, mas eu sabia que eu precisava encontrar alguém aceitável e barato, senão ele decidiria por mim. O único artista que, ao saber que a Marvel conseguiu os direitos para Conan e enviou algumas amostras de desenhos não-solicitadas foi um jovem chamado Bernie Wrightson. Eu gostei dos desenhos, mas ou Stan não gostou — ou eu estava tão certo que ele não gostaria que nunca mostrei para ele. (Mas eu fiz uma anotação mental de encontrar outra coisa para Bernie em um futuro próximo, que acabaria sendo a primeira história de Kull pela Marvel).

Isso ainda me deixou com Conan, o Bárbaro, sem definição. E então a escolha óbvia veio a mim:

Barry Smith.

Barry (que se tornaria "Windsor-Smith" pouco tempo depois de parar de desenhar Conan), era um jovem desenhista inglês que, por um curto período desenhando quadrinhos como freelancer para a Marvel no ano anterior, foi sumariamente chutado pra fora dos EUA pelo serviço de imigração. Ou ele nunca teve o indispensável "green card", ou ele tinha uma permissão de trabalho que venceu... Não sei qual é a verdade, mas de todo modo, agora ele estava de volta a Londres, desenhando histórias de mistério ou arcos pequenos do Demolidor ou, com mais sucesso, Os Vingadores. Seu estilo foi extremamente influenciado por Jack Kirby, com uma pitada de Jim Steranko na mistura. Primeiro foi Stan, e logo depois eu, tivemos a sensação que, apesar de uma certa falta de polimento e problemas anatômicos, o trabalho de Barry tinha uma faísca da qual algum dia poderia acender uma chama real no coração dos leitores da Marvel.

E isso aconteceu, uns poucos meses antes, só por brincadeira, eu bolei uma história de espada & magia que fiz Barry desenhar. Era um herói no estilo de Conan chamado Starr, o Matador, que Barry desenhou com um elmo chifrudo de um tipo peculiar: na verdade, ele tinha chifres na frente, ao invés de apenas nos lados, como de costume, dando a ele um visual de um touro enfurecido. Em nosso conto, Starr era supostamente a criação de um escritor de ficção do século 20, chamado Len Carson (o

nome soa familiar?), que teve algum sucesso com ele mas agora estava determinado a matá-lo em uma história final... então Starr, de alguma forma mágica, atravessa até o mundo moderno e mata Carson, então retornando para seu próprio mundo. E, quando um rascunho da história datilografada por Carson voa ao vento, o leitor é deixado a imaginar quem, Starr ou Carson, era mais real. A resposta parecia ser Starr, já que no final da história ele era aquele que ainda estava vivo.

Foi apenas uma história única, sem intenção de lançar uma série contínua... apesar que, quem sabe? A Marvel poderia ter terminado com um gibi de Starr, o Matador por Thomas e Smith, se Stan não tivesse sentido que a melhor abordagem fosse licenciar um personagem já estabelecido.

Do jeito que estava, eu falei com Barry por telefone. (Eu sempre tive problemas de ser reembolsado pela Marvel naqueles dias por uma ligação internacional, muito mais cara do que hoje... mas eu queria dar a Barry as boas novas pessoalmente e prepará-lo para a sinopse que imediatamente seguia pelo que então era chamado de "Correio Aéreo".) Barry ficou encantado e aceitou a tarefa de imediato.

Éle desenhou a história rapidamente e enviou de volta. Após vê-la, Stan e eu sentimos (como o próprio Barry,
soubemos depois) que ele tinha "travado" um pouco nesta primeira edição, e muitas das artes não eram tão boas
quanto algumas que ele havia experimentado na história
de espada & magia, tanto para a Marvel e potencialmente
para seus outros projetos externos, tais como um fanzine
chamado Paradox. Ele, Stan e eu optamos por ele desenhar Conan usando o mesmo elmo com chifres na frente
que Starr, o Matador usara, afinal, os leitores da Marvel estavam acostumados com heróis uniformizados, então por
que não dar a Conan um leve toque de uniforme sem ele
ter mesmo que trajar um?

Como editor, Stan decidiu que não gosta da página de abertura, na qual o jovem Conan aparecia sacando sua espada enquanto se virava para o leitor. Então eu fiz um esboco simples de uma pose simbólica do cimério, baseado na capa de Frazetta para Conan, the Adventurer, e até escrevi um título ("O Advento de Conan", do nome de outro relançamento em capa dura dos anos 1950), então fiz Barry desenhar ambas e uma nova página a ser inserida na página 2, que levava à ação da antiga página 2 (a qual agora era a página 3, se você estiver acompanhando tudo isto). Isso significava, é claro, que estávamos com uma página a mais do que nossa contagem agendada de páginas, então eu tive que cortar uma página de porradaria do clímax da história. Bem, um punho no queixo não era mesmo o estilo do Conan. (Você poderá ver a página de abertura deslocada e um festival de quadros nas páginas 650-651 e 655-656 deste volume. Nós preferimos não jogar nada coisa fora, se possível!)

Uma coisa que eu consegui deixar intacta, uma adição que fiz à lenda do Conan, foi ele contemplar uma visão induzida por um xamã de um passado distante (uma imagem de seu predecessor criado por Howard, o Rei Kull), de um futuro um tanto próximo (o próprio Conan, sendo coroado rei em alguma terra desconhecida), e do futuro distante (as pirâmides do Egito e até o homem no espaço). Não que o jovem bárbaro tenha compreendido muito do que testemunhou, estava lá mais para localizar a assim chamada Era Hiboriana em sua própria perspectiva pseudo-histórica e deixar o leitor da Marvel saber o que os leitores dos livros já sabiam: que Conan estava destinado a um dia se tornar o governante de um reino civilizado.

Dan Adkins, que viera para a Marvel do estúdio do antigo artista do Demolidor, Wally Wood, foi designado na arte-final. A edição 1 acabou ficando boa, mas Stan e eu ambos procuramos aprimorar o trabalho de Barry para a 2. (Stan não comentou na minha história, já que ele confessara saber pouco sobre como uma obra de espada & magia deveria ser... mas eu estava mais ou menos satisfeito com o meu roteiro também. Tanto Barry quanto eu tivemos que ir aprendendo durante o caminho.)

Barry enviou uma ótima capa dramática, com o artefinal do homem da produção, John Verpoorten. Eu adicionei o título da história e um único balão explosivo para Conan: "Até a morte!" Stan adicionou a linha do topo: "Novidade! Pela primeira vez em forma de quadrinhos!" O nome de Howard não estava na capa, e o contrato não dizia que precisávamos usar seu nome em qualquer lugar do gibi... mas eu a coloquei na página de abertura, porque eu queria impulsionar o Howard quase o mesmo tanto que eu queria impulsionar o Conan. Eu estava virando um fã de REH, pura e simplesmente.

Ainda houve um toque final para ajudar a orientar novos leitores: um mapa múndi da Era Hiboriana, baseado em um que o próprio Howard desenhara nos anos 1930... uma massa de terra há milênios desaparecida, ou pelo menos parte dela no qual a Europa, dois terços do norte da África e as regiões ocidentais da Ásia viriam a se tornar éons depois.

Com isso, nós mandamos Conan, o Bárbaro número 1 para o mundo.

Por algum motivo, Stan não deu a esse lançamento mais do que uma frase no seu boletim daquele mês. Talvez por eu ter conseguido uma propaganda de meia página para ele, usando uma arte de Marie Severin, que acabou indo parar na página de seu Boletim da Redação nas semanas antes da revista estrear.

Para a segunda edição, ainda travado pela nossa falta de direitos em adaptar uma das histórias verdadeiras do Conan para quadrinhos, eu mesmo assim encontrei uma maneira de me basear nas escritas do Howard. Ele escreveu um longo ensaio chamado "A Era Hiboriana" que relatava a pseudo-história e das épocas antes e depois do Conan, levando até o alvorecer da história conhecida. Nisso, ele fez uma referência a uma raça de macacos nortenhos inteligentes, que derrotaram uma expedição humana enviada contra eles. Na história que concebi, os descendentes dos humanos capturados eram os escravos dos macacos, e o foram por gerações — até Conan aparecer e os libertar, ao mesmo tempo que salvava sua própria pele bronzeada.

A comunicação entre Barry e eu estava longe de ser perfeita, já que ele ainda estava na Inglaterra, a uma cara ligação de distância — então, talvez por conta de minhas instruções serem muito ambíguas, ele deu aos homensmacacos um nivel maior de civilização (completo com armaduras, palácios e coisa assim), do que eu havia planejado, quase como um Planeta dos Macacos... mas eu gostei da arte e não queria forçá-lo a redesenhar nada, então eu escrevi daquela forma e, mais tarde, a história foi nomeada para o prêmio Shazam em 1970 pela própria Academia de Histórias em Quadrinhos. O único passo em falso foi que, na página de abertura, Barry desenhou Conan em cima de um imenso urso que ele havia acabado de matar, para fazer um casaco contra o frio. Quando o publisher Goodman viu a página, ele decretou que teria que ser redesenhada para mostrar Conan sobre um homem-macaco morto no lugar. Isso entregou a surpresa da história algumas páginas antes, mas a palavra de Goodman era a lei, então Barry redesenhou o urso como um homem-macaco e eu fiz o meu melhor para escrever a cena para ficar como se quiséssemos que tivesse ficado desde o início. Mas não era.

O próprio Barry desenhou uma poderosa imagem do Conan para um anúncio nessa segunda edição. Se Conan, o Bárbaro, não fosse notado pelos fãs de super-heróis da Marvel, não seria por eu não o ter destacado onde quer que eu pudesse!

Na terceira edição, comecei a abrir caminho para minhas não-tão-secretas esperanças em adaptar uma das histórias clássicas do Conan do Robert E. Howard, apesar de não haver nenhuma cláusula no contrato para isso. Eu arranjei, com Glenn Lord, para que a Marvel fosse capaz de usar um pouco do estilo de balada-poética de Howard em uma história: um poema chamado "A Hora de Zukala". Barry e eu transformamos Zukala de uma figura divina abstrata (a partir do poema) em um feiticeiro mascarado à la Ditko (em nossa história), e as coisas correram bem. Eu estava um pouco descontente com a última página da história como ela havia sido originalmente desenhada, particularmente com a noção de um demônio de asas caindo para sua morte pois, como Barry me explicou, ele estava "cansado demais " por lutar com Conan para voar. Aquela era uma explicação lógica o suficiente, mas de certa forma parecia insatisfatória para o contexto da história, então eu mudei. Felizmente, os quadros que foram largados foram publicados nas páginas 668-669 deste volume. (Se ocorrer de você ser um leitor particularmente atento que percebeu que Zukala não aparece em Conan, o Bárbaro 3 conforme impresso, continue lendo, e tudo será revelado para você).

Dando sequência ao acordo do poema, eu persuadi Glenn de que ele deveria permitir a Marvel adaptar uma história do REH - "A Torre do Elefante", minha favorita entre todas as do Conan — para a quarta edição. Um pouco de dinheiro adicional seria dado, o que, de alguma forma – eu não me recordo como, neste momento – convenci a Marvel e a Martin Goodman pagarem. Ao mesmo tempo, eu contei a Glenn que adoraria fazer o mesmo negócio quanto a algumas das histórias de Howard sem serem do Conan. L. Sprague de Camp, que vendeu o material original do Conan para a empresa de publicações encadernadas Lancer, no meio dos anos 1960, tinha feito isso desde aquele material capa dura mencionado anteriormente (para uma empresa chamada Gnome Press) nos anos 1950: pego alguma história de aventura escrita pelo Howard com ambientação antiga, medieval e até mesmo

moderna e a mudado, com um pouco de prosa alterada e a adição de uma ameaça sobrenatural se não houves-se nenhuma no original, e a transformando em um conto do Conan. Eu adoraria fazer o mesmo com qualquer número de histórias do REH, agora que já havia lido todas as histórias do Conan e uma boa porção das outras prosas de Howard também. Glenn era receptivo a sugestões das histórias não-Conan-para-Conan também — e, como acabou sendo, Goodman também. Eu devo ter nascido sob uma estrela da sorte, para fazer o publisher da Marvel pagar dinheiro adicional para a propriedade, apenas poucos meses depois dele forçar Stan e eu a entregarem a arte a um desenhista quase novato! Mas, na época, Goodman pode ter pensado que estávamos pagando para histórias do Conan de fato.

E então, na ordem seguinte, Barry desenhou a história de Zukala (a qual eu nomeei como "A Filha de Zukala"), "A Torre do Elefante" (trabalhando com uma combinação da história original e de uma sinopse que enviei para Barry sobre como eu gostaria de vê-la adaptada, aos quais ele adicionou outros ótimos detalhes por conta própria) e "O Crepúsculo do Deus Cinzento". A última foi baseada em um conto semi-histórico de Howard chamado "O Deus Cinza Falece", ambientada na Batalha de Clontarf (um confronto entre vikings e irlandeses em 1014).

Com essas três edições bimestrais finalizadas adiantadas de minha própria necessidade de roteirizá-las, eu repentinamente percebi duas coisas:

Primeiro, Barry estava colocando cada vez mais detalhes ornados em cada obra. Seu trabalho em "A Filha de Zukala" ainda estava bem próximo do traço das primeiras duas edições, mas melhorava a passos largos, e assim, Stan e eu estávamos totalmente contentes com a noção dele ser o artista de Conan.

Segundo, eu percebi que fazia mais sentido para o "Deus Cinzento" se tornar a edição 3, porque daí ela aconteceria quando nosso herói rumava para o sul, para terras mais civilizadas — nas quais, na edição 4, seria Zamora, a qual eu via mais ou menos equivalente à Ásia Menor, enquanto a história de "Zukala" poderia facilmente ocorrer em Zamora após os eventos de "Elefante." Então eu mudei a ordem das histórias, causando um pouco de confusão entre os leitores de olhar mais atento que perceberam que as edições 3 e 4 estavam belamente ilustradas, enquanto a 5 parecia um passo para trás para a abordagem mais Kirbyesca das duas primeiras edições. Bem, eles superaram isso.

Para a edição 6, eu queria levar Conan para a cidade zamoriana chamada Shadizar, a Maldita, cujo nome havia me intrigado nas histórias de Howard — apesar de nenhuma aventura de Conan de REH acontecer no lugar. Isso deu a Barry a chance de fazer uma sequência de batalha estendida com um morcego gigantesco, na qual ele realmente se esforçou. O único erro: no primeiro grande painel no qual o imenso morcego faz sua aparição, Barry desenhou suas asas de uma forma anatomicamente incorreta; mas pedi ao arte-finalizador Sal Buscema (que substituiu Adkins após a primeira edição) para consertar e tudo terminou bem. Foi a primeira história original, sem ser do Howard, para Conan, o Bárbaro na qual eu fiqueira de la cidado de la cidado de la cidado de la cidado de la consertar de la cidado de la consertar de la cidado de la

completamente feliz com roteiro e arte. ("A Torre do Elefante" não conta; foi um triunfo do começo ao fim, ao meu ver. Eu já mencionei que ela era, e ainda é, minha história favorita dentre todas de Robert E. Howard, seja com o Conan ou não?)

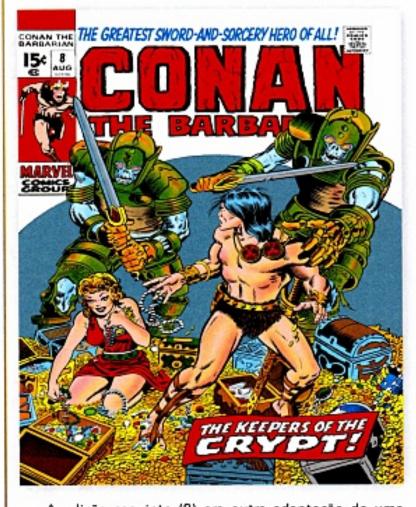
A edição 7 foi um pouco desafiadora. Era baseada em um conto menor do Conan chamado "O Deus na Urna" que foi rejeitada nos anos 1930 pelo editor da Weird Tales e só foi publicada no final dos 1960 — e tínhamos que a estender consideravelmente para poder fazer uma edição completa satisfatória. Acontece que minha então esposa Jean e eu estávamos em umas férias de três semanas na Inglaterra naquela época, então eu me reuni com Barry no saguão de nosso hotel e juntos nós definimos várias coisas que precisávamos adicionar para a história, incluindo uma feroz batalha com uma serpente com cabeça de homem na qual, na trama original, era simplesmente decapitada por Conan em um único golpe. (Além disso, para ter um pouco de beleza feminina na história, mudamos um personagem-chave de homem para mulher, já que o elenco inteiro era todo masculino.) Barry deve ter levado uma mordida de Stan Lee durante seus meses em Nova York. pois durante o nosso planejamento ele ficou muito animado e começou a dar saltos, fazer movimentos de golpes e coisa do tipo, para o horror de outros hóspedes sentados ao redor. Eu era o calmo e sério americano, em contraste.

A sétima edição na verdade marcou um ponto de virada que nenhum de nós ainda estava ciente.

Acabou que Conan, o Bárbaro 1 havia vendido muito bem... então talvez tenha sido por conta dos relatórios de vendas iniciais que o publisher Goodman deu aval para nosso pagamento extra para adaptarmos a poesia e prosa de Howard em algumas edições. Entretanto, começando com a segunda edição e indo até a sétima, cada nova edição vendia um pouco menos que a anterior. Não era um bom sinal... mas eu estava percebendo conforme isso seguia, mesmo que eu rezasse para o deus de Conan, Crom, por uma virada a favor de nossa fortuna.

Stan fazia o mesmo, e ele resolveu o problema — o que mostra, de novo, o porquê de ele ser um dos mais proeminentes editores dos quadrinhos do século 20. Ele me chamou em seu escritório um dia e me contou que ele sentia que muitas das ameaças naquelas sete primeiras capas do Conan eram... animais. Os demônios alados e os homens-macaco e o gigantesco deus-cabeça nas três primeiras poderiam ser aceitáveis... mas então, em ordem, veio uma "aranha do tamanho de um porco", uma jovem mulher que se torna uma tigresa, um morcego gigante e finalmente uma cobra com cabeça de homem. Stan veio aprovando essas capas por todo o tempo, o que o fazia um pouco culpado... mas agora que ele percebeu o inadvertido tema animal, ele disse que eu deveria me certificar de haverem oponentes mais humanoides nas futuras capas.

Eu estava para fazer o Barry desenhar a capa para a edição 8, baseada em uma sinopse de Howard para uma história de Conan que ele nunca escreveu (Mas L. Sprague de Camp tinha escrito, com a ajuda de seu jovem colega Lin Carter, mas nós não tínhamos os direitos para usar qualquer história do de Camp, só as do Howard). A trama tinha duas linhas distintas: um ser monstruoso que assombrava a cidade (o qual Barry tinha decidido, brilhantemente, desenhar como um gigantesco Monstro-de-Gila, completo com todas as escamas redondas) e uma certa quantidade de "esqueletos de armadura" de dois metros de altura, os quais ganhariam vida, portando espadas. Se fóssemos deixados por conta, Barry e eu poderíamos ter optado por qualquer uma dessas ameaças para a capa de Conan. Com o édito do Stan, nós optamos pelos esqueletos de armadura, é claro, e eles deram uma baita capa — com o único porém de Stan não gostar da face de uma jovem mulher desenhada nela, e fez com que o assistente de arte não oficial, John Romita, redesenhasse, já que Barry ainda estava em Londres e o tempo urgia. Barry, naturalmente, ficou descontente com aquilo — o que foi feito estava feito.



A edição seguinte (9) era outra adaptação de uma história de REH sem ser do Conan: "O Jardim do Medo", contendo um demônio alado de aparência humana que reinava sobre um vale perdido. Nesse caso, não havia outra possível escolha de antagonista para a capa, então nós certamente iríamos usar o demônio mesmo sem o édito de Stan. (Em caso de você estar imaginando como eu consegui cópias de todas essas histórias raras do REH, algumas que ou não foram impressas ou não foram reimpressas desde os anos 1930 — bem, isso foi por conta do bom trabalho de Glenn Lord, que acabou me fornecendo cópias de virtualmente tudo que Howard havia escrito, publicadas ou não.)

Então logo após os relatórios de vendas da edição 7 chegarem, Stan decidiu, baseado nos números das vendas das primeiras sete edições, que Conan, o Bárbaro realmente não ia para lugar algum. Ele foi ficando cada vez mais impressionado pela arte de Barry, e naturalmente desejou colocá-lo em um gibi de super-heróis onde seus talentos poderiam resultar em melhores vendas. Então, um dia enquanto eu figuei em meu apartamento para escrever, ele persuadiu Martin Goodman a cancelar a revista do Conan. Quando eu voltei, no dia seguinte, eu fiquei horrorizado. Resoluto, eu marchei para dentro do escritório de Stan e falei para ele que se quisesse tirar Barry do Conon e o colocá-lo em um título de super-herói, bem, isso era sua prerrogativa como editor, e eu não brigaria por isso, mas por que matar o título do Conon tão rapidamente, só para liberar um artista? (Stan claramente acreditava que Barry era tão ávido para desenhar a revista do bárbaro que ele poderia resistir em sair dela — mas ele não poderia fazer objeção se não houvesse um gibi do Conan de onde ele seria removido, poderia? Eu senti que aquilo era ilógico, e contei isso para Stan, tão firme e educadamente quanto eu podia.)

Eu devo ter sido persuasivo (e passional) o bastante aquele dia para que Stan, depois de alguns minutos,
voltasse atrás e colocasse o Conan de volta no cronograma — como uma bimestral. (Ela passou de bimestral para
mensal a começar pela edição 4, provavelmente por conta das boas ventas da primeira edição). Não estou certo
se Barry sabia de todos os circunlóquios que se passaram
para manter Conan, o Bárbaro vivo, e ele como artista. Ele
estava, afinal, ainda na Inglaterra... apesar de que ele logo
se encontraria capaz de retornar para os EUA e seguir trabalhando para a Marvel aqui, graças aos esforços da engenhosa colaboradora Mimi Gold, que tinha desenvolvido
um interesse especial no caso de Barry.

E, só para completar a natureza de contos de fada do caso inteiro, não é que Stan estava certo sobre as capas? A edição 8 foi a primeira a vender melhor que a anterior, e a edição 9 continuou a tendência progressiva. Pelas próximas três décadas seguintes, Conon, o Bárbaro, nunca mais entrou na lista de "espécies ameaçadas".

Com Barry novamente nos EUA, ele e eu poderíamos conversar sobre as edições pessoalmente novamente, e ambos preferimos aquela abordagem do que apenas eu escrever uma sinopse ou enviar para Barry as fotocópias marcadas da história impressa. Tanto como editor tanto quanto escritor, eu tinha o voto de minerva em qualquer desentendimento entre nós dois sobre determinar o que fazer... mas eu tinha um grande respeito pelos instintos de Barry, e todos os motivos para querê-lo feliz desenhando Conan. Eu não me lembro de haver qualquer desentendimento sobre minha vontade de fazer "Inimigos em Casa", a próxima história do Howard adaptada para quadrinhos; era a próxima em ordem cronológica na vida do Conan, mapeada em artigos tão antigos que o próprio Howard havia aprovado para uma "Biografia Informal de Conan, o Cimério" pouco antes de sua precoce morte. Nós faríamos "Inimigos" na edição 11.

E quanto à 10? Bem, o conto em prosa "Inimigos" começa com Conan em uma masmorra, com um pouco de narração contando como ele foi parar lá: ele estava enamorado por uma jovem que o entregou à "polícia" (ele era um ladrão nessa época da vida, afinal — e ele havia recentemente abatido um clérigo corrupto do deus Anu, depois que o sacerdote causou a morte de um amigo dele). Então nós esticamos esse pedaço da narração em uma história completa na edição 10, que levaria até a edição 11.

No meio tempo, Conan, o Bárbaro passou a ser tamanho-gigante — bem como todos os quadrinhos da Marvel.

Seguindo os passos da DC, que tornara todos os seus títulos de 32 páginas (mais capas) e vendendo por 15 centavos, em 48 páginas (mais capas), vendidas a 25 centavos, Martin Goodman decidiu que a Marvel faria o mesmo. Isso significava que, do dia para noite, todo gibi da Marvel repentinamente precisava de uma vez e meia mais páginas de história que no mês anterior! Mesmo se algumas daquelas páginas de ambas as empresas pudessem ser reimpressões, ainda era um monte de trabalho para uma equipe já atarefada, mas nós tínhamos que fazê-lo. E nós não tínhamos nem tanta coisa boa para reimprimir de eras anteriores como a DC tinhal

No caso de Conan 10, nós esticamos a história um pouco (de 20 páginas para 23), reimprimimos uma história dos anos 1950 do medieval Cavaleiro Negro e pegamos Marie e John Severin para ilustrar um poema de cinco páginas sobre o herói anterior de REH, o Rei Kull. (Eu estava determinado desde o início que, se Conan, o Bárbaro, fosse um sucesso, eu tentaria fazer a Marvel aceitar um gibi do Kull. O que logo aceitariam).

Na próxima edição, porém, nós precisamos das 34 páginas inteiras da edição para a história fazer justica a "Inimigos em Casa", a história de corrupção na Era Hiboriana cujo ponto alto foi a batalha entre Conan e um macaco inteligente usando um manto escarlate. O tamanho extenuou Barry consideravelmente, mas ele o superou com uma performance corajosa que excedeu até a maioria de seus esforços anteriores. Ele também fez uma contribuição para a história, alterando um grupo de ladrões divergentes (haviam inúmeros deles no conto) para um leopardo de estimação que atacava o homem-macaco. "Inimigos" foi – e ainda é, acredito - um ponto alto dos quadrinhos nos anos 1970... mas como diabos eu e Barry conseguiríamos entregar 34 páginas de Conan todo mês ou a cada dois meses? (Nesse ponto, o édito de mudar o quadrinho para bimestral ainda não havia entrado em ação.)



Bem, no final das contas, nós não teríamos que produzir mais episódios de 34 páginas do Conan. Goodman, por boas ou más intenções, repentinamente decidiu, depois de dois meses, reverter nosso curso e voltar todos os gibis da Marvel para 32 páginas mais capas... só que agora por 20 centavos ao invés de 15. Ele definiu tendo o lado dos negócios em mente que o tamanho e o preço funcionavam muito melhor para os sempre importantes revendedores, analisando o resultado da DC que, continuando com seus gibis maiores a 25 centavos por muitos meses, realmente ficaram encalhados nas bancas. Isso foi bom numa perspectiva competitiva, acredito... mas como uma criança que cresceu com "gibis de 52 páginas", eu fiquei contente pelo aumento das páginas e triste ao ver as publicações diminuírem novamente, apesar disso ter salvado todos nós de uma exaustão completa.

Barry e eu poderíamos ter tido dificuldades em bolar a Conan 12, mesmo com 20 páginas, mas por sorte tínhamos um ás na manga. Alguns meses atrás, Stan convenceu Goodman a publicar uma revista preto e branco fora do Comics Code chamada Savage Tales, que contou com uma adaptação de 11 páginas do Conan por Barry e eu (mais sobre isso depois). Esse e o episódio seguinte de Conan para Savage Tales 2 foram feitos via conversas por telefone e tal, enquanto Barry ainda estava exilado na Inglaterra. Goodman, porém, nunca foi um entusiasta em fazermos quadrinhos fora do Comics Code, então ele abruptamente cancelou a Savage Tales depois de uma única edição, provavelmente baseado menos nos relatórios de vendas e mais em seu desgosto instintivo.

Isso deixou Barry e eu com minha história original de 12 páginas para ST2, "O Habitante das Trevas", disponível para se tornar uma atração principal em Conan, o Bárbaro 12, com alguns ajustes necessários para fazer uma história desenvolvida em preto e branco ser funcional em cores. Além disso, o pessoal do Comics Code nos fez cobrir uma considerável parcela de pele feminina exposta que não seria problema algum em Savage Tales 2. (Nós estávamos felizes que a versão original em P&B daquela história ainda havia sido conservada, para ser lançada em Savage Tales 4 – sem contar neste volume que você segura em suas mãos, então você pode comparar as duas versões). Para colorir a história, o artista e colaborador Gil Kane e eu trabalhamos em uma história de espada & magia sem ser do Conan; Gil também desenhou a capa da edição. O motivo de o Barry não ter desenhado aquela capa eu não me lembro mais precisamente; muito provavelmente foi por culpa de um prazo apertado, já que Stan e eu preferiríamos que Barry tivesse feito a arte de capa. Mesmo assim, Gil era um entusiasta da aquisição do Conan pela Marvel e deixou claro que ele amaria desenhar a série assim que fosse possível.

Lá pela edição 13, eu já estava ávido para tentar algo diferente. Naquela época, só um punhado de escritores em prosa tiveram a chance de fazer uma história do cimério: L. Sprague de Camp, Lin Carter e um sueco chamado Björn Nyberg que produziu um romance curto sobre Conan como um rei, o qual de Camp havia editado pesadamente para ser publicado. Então eu decidi convidar muitos praticantes notáveis de espada & magia para bolarem (e serem pagos pelo menos um valor digno por) sinopses para Conan, o Bárbaro.

A primeira a ser aceita veio de John Jakes, criador (para os pulps de ciência e fantasia dos anos 1950), de Brak, o Bárbaro, um tipo de Conan loiro cujo primeiro encadernado tinha capa do Frazetta. Por conta das histórias do quadrinho terem que caber dentro de um certo período da vida do herói, eu sugeri um conto ambientado em Yezud, a Cidade do Deus-Aranha — outro lugar referenciado mas nunca visto em uma história do Howard — e pedi para que o "deus" fosse uma aranha gigantesca, muito maior do que a vista na "Torre do Elefante". John ficou feliz em aceitar, e o resultado se tornou Conan 13, "A Teia do Deus- -Aranha". (Pule até a página 757 se quiser ler a sinopse de John). Apesar de eu não saber na época, Jakes logo se tornaria um autor do best-seller "The Kent Family Chronicles", uma série de romances celebrando o bicentenário americano; mas ele manteve seu amor pela ficção-científica e pela fantasia. Na verdade, ele me disse que ainda tem, pendurado em sua parede, a página de abertura com a arte de "A Teia do Deus-Aranha", a qual eu dei para ele quando Barry e eu dividimos as artes originais das primeiras edições de Conan.

Um tropeço da edição aconteceu quando Stan rejeitou o projeto de capa de Barry, depois de ter sido desenhada e arte-finalizada, pois ela mostrava Conan lutando com uma aranha gigante. De acordo com seu édito anterior, Stan insistiu em mais ameaças humanoides na capa, então Barry desenhou outra, mostrando o bárbaro batalhando contra uma turba de homens de presas, com uma teia de aranha ao fundo. Essa capa não tinha nada a ver com o que tinha dentro, a não ser pela teia de aranha, mas a edição vendeu bem o bastante, então talvez Stan tivesse razão. Não seria a primeira vez. Sorte a sua: é possível ver a capa original de Barry na página 706 deste volume.

Para as edições 14-15, decidi convidar Michael Moorcock, o autor inglês das histórias do herói de espada & magia definitivamente anti-Conan, Elric de Melniboné, um albino magricela cujo poder vinha apenas de sua espada mágica, Stormbringer. Naquela época, inúmeros romances de Elric apareceram na forma de encadernados nos EUA, mas seu artista de capa havia o desenhado erroneamente como um herói usando um chapéu alto e pontudo que parecia uma touca para alunos burros, de desenhos animados. Infelizmente, Barry e eu usamos aquelas imagens de capa como nosso molde para o chapéu de Elric, mas de toda forma, a história em duas partes foi um sucesso. Além de adicionar o diálogo preciso, minha maior contribuição para essas edições foi remover uma subtrama (bem como um personagem ou dois) da deveras complexa sinopse delineada por Moorcock e seu associado, Jim Cawthorn, para poder manter as coisas gerenciáveis. Kulan Gath, o feiticeiro vil criado por Moorcock e Cawthron para aquela história, já reapareceu em inúmeros quadrinhos da Marvel.

Nesta época, porém, Barry havia decidido que era hora de deixar Conan, o Bárbaro, e procurar seu destino em outras áreas; então ele terminou a 15, a última edição bimestral de Conan e então deixou o título, presumivelmente para sempre.

Para ganhar tempo para outro artista se orientar com o Conan — e por que Barry e eu realmente queríamos conseguimos fazer com que a número 16 também fosse uma edição desenhada por Smith. Lembram-se da história única da Savage Tales de 1971? Bem, sua principal história foi uma adaptação de 11 páginas por nós dois (organizada por uma rápida ligação transatlântica), de "A Filha do Gigante de Gelo", uma trama de Howard ambientada no norte enquanto o jovem Conan luta junto aos aesires. REH provavelmente pretendia que essa história se passasse um pouco cedo na cronologia do Conan, mas, em anotações publicadas em encadernados da Lancer, de Camp a colocou acontecendo mais tarde, em um breve retorno do bárbaro para suas regiões natais. Como a Savage Tales 1 começa com uma página dupla, Barry desenhou uma nova página 1 que a antecedia no gibi colorido, arredondando-a para 12 páginas. (Como tapa-buracos em Conan 16, nós relançamos a história de Starr, o Matador de Chamber of Darkness 4, que agora parece um tanto primitiva se comparada com a "Filha do Gigante de Gelo", feita um ano depois).

Por coincidência, a Marvel escolheu aquele mês para restaurar Conan, o Bárbaro para sua periodicidade mensal; as coisas estavam claramente indo bem nas vendas.

Começando na edição 17, eu coloquei Gil Kane para ser o segundo desenhista da revista. (Por que não John Buscema? Não estou certo. Talvez John estivesse muito ocupado naquela época com outros encargos dados por Stan para assumir as rédeas... ou talvez, porque Gil e eu tínhamos gasto muito tempo juntos discutindo sobre Howard e Conan no ano anterior, eu senti que devia a Gil a chance. Ele sempre foi uma das minhas escolhas principais, como deve lembrar). Claramente, naquele momento, as vendas estavam altas o suficiente para nós não precisarmos evitar usar um artista de custo elevado em Conan. Além disso, Martin Goodman havia se aposentado e dado lugar ao seu filho, Chip — e, de desconhecimento da maioria (eu incluso), Stan estava quase para ser promovido para se tornar o novo publisher da Marvel!

Gil, eu já sabia, havia tentado comprar os direitos para uma história de Robert E. Howard que não era do Conan chamada "Os Deuses de Bal-Sagoth"; ela contava com a presença de um pirata gaélico da era viking chamado Turlogh Dubh O'Brien e seu aliado por conveniência, Athelstane, o Saxão, náufragos em uma ilha na qual habitou uma antiga, corrupta e mágica civilização. Ele perguntou se ele e eu poderíamos adaptar aquele conto logo de cara — e, como o destino desejava, ela cabia perfeitamente na direção que eu queria seguir com a série naquele momento. As viagens zamorianas de Conan o levaram até as redondezas do Mar de Vilayet (o Interno), que ficou no lugar do Oceano Atlântico da trama original. Ralph Reese, um discípulo do lendário Wally Wood, foi designado como arte-finalista e fez um tremendo trabalho - com outro jovem artista, Frank Brunner, finalizando a capa de Gil. Turlogh foi transformado em Conan, é claro, e Athelstane se tornou Fafnir — revivendo um bárbaro ruivo que Barry

e eu apresentamos de passagem na edição 6, como uma homenagem a outro autor de espada & magia em prosa, Fritz Leiber, criador das celebradas histórias de Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser, entre os anos de 1930 até 1960.

Tanto Gil quanto minha história em duas partes (17-18) foram um sucesso de vendas, com a segunda parte arte-finalizada por outro arte-finalista favorito de Gil, Dan Adkins. A edição 18 vendeu especialmente bem, e eu senti que era parcialmente devido ao fato que John Romita, que tinha um toque de Midas para as vendas naqueles tempos, ter arte-finalizado a capa. No final da história, eu tinha Conan e Fafnir encontrando com ninguém menos que o Príncipe Yezdigerd, futuro herdeiro do trono do império de Turan, na costa oeste de Vilayet. Yezdigerd era uma presença hostil porém afastada em muitas histórias do Conan, e eu queria desenvolvê-lo sob os holofotes nos quadrinhos.

Porém, Gil decidiu que ele já tinha terminado seu ciclo com o Conan. Ele sempre quis desenhar o personagem, mas descobriu, especialmente com a revista voltando ao seu status mensal, que fazer isso o impedia de desenhar muitas outras coisas, e assim diminuía sua renda. Além disso, como ele disse a um colaborador da Marvel (que logo depois me relatou): "Roy quer que eu desenhe a droga de um épico por edição!" Bem, é claro que eu queria! Afinal, nós estávamos competindo com a memória recente dos desconcertantes esforços de Barry Smith, e Barry foi adicionando cada vez mais detalhes (entre outras coisas) em sua arte, a cada edição. Senti que precisávamos manter a tradição, ou arriscaríamos que os leitores vissem Conan indo ladeira abaixo.

A reação dos fãs à arte do Gil na série foi mista. Alguns a exaltaram, enquanto outros lamentaram a perda de Smith (assim como eu mesmo, mas eu não poderia acorrentar Barry na mesa, ou poderia?) Ainda assim, as vendas estariam em boas condições se Gil optasse por ficar. Eu não queria quaisquer novos problemas: por volta dessa época, Stan se tornou oficialmente o publisher da Marvel, promovido pelo conglomerado que havia comprado a editora em 1968 — e eu fui "assentado" (se é essa a palavra) em meu novo trabalho como sucessor de Stan como editor-chefe. Eu não queria mais ter que entrar em uma "Caçada a um Grande Artista de Conan" novamente!

Mas, eis que Gil foi rapidamente substituído como artista de Conan por – Barry Smith!

Não sei com o que Barry se ocupou durante aqueles meses em que não estava desenhando as façanhas do bárbaro, mas ele me disse que gostaria de retornar ao gibi do Conan assim que fosse possível.

E, ora, vejam só o que não tinha acabado de acontecer...!

Barry subiu a bordo bem quando eu estava para lançar o que eu chamaria alternadamente de Guerra Hyrkaniana (nomeada a partir na massa de terra no flanco de Vilayet na Era Hiboriana da qual fazia parte), ou de Guerra do Tarim (batizada por conta do nome de um deus que peguei do REH). Como a Ilíada, de Homero, era há muito tempo minha obra de literatura favorita, eu estava sempre procurando a oportunidade de refazer a Guerra de Troja de uma forma ou de outra nos quadrinhos, esta foi

a primeira delas, com os turanianos sitiando a cidade-estado portuária independente de Makkalet, cujos habitantes haviam sequestrado o Tarim — a encarnação viva (como o Dalai Lama) de um dos deuses chefes da religião de ambos os lados.

Barry retornou ao Conon com seus talentos, no mínimo, aprimorados... e começou a adicionar extensos detalhes de personagens, geralmente por conta própria, entre Conan e Fafnir, Conan e Yezdigerd, etc. (Testemunhe, por exemplo, a cena na segunda página da edição 19 na qual um tolo soldado turaniano corta o nariz do cimério com sua lança — com resultados previsíveis mas satisfatórios). Esses toques aprofundaram a história, mesmo se eles fossem algumas vezes incidentes que eu suspeito que o próprio Howard nunca usaria em uma história. Bem, eu fazia esse tipo de coisa de tempos em tempos, e não importava realmente se Barry ou eu tínhamos pensado em uma sequência em particular; isso tudo se tornou parte do mito em quatro cores do Conan. Eu tentei dar a Barry muita liberdade, e acho que a aposta vingou.



O único problema com a edição 19 era que ficamos sem tempo, com Adkins não tendo tempo para arte-finalizar toda a história, então a metade final teve que ser reproduzida a partir do lápis de Barry. Porém, as técnicas de impressão eram muito primitivas naquela época para pegar todos os traços de seu trabalho, então mais detalhes do que gostaríamos acabaram sendo perdidos. Mesmo assim, conseguimos — e sempre haveria uma próxima edição, certo?

Conan 20 continuou a guerra, e Barry jogou uma coisa no meu colo que destacou o fato de que a guerra é inerentemente menos glamorosa do que às vezes aparece em romances e filmes de espada & magia. Ele fez com que o amigo de Conan, Fafnir, perdesse seu braço esquerdo em batalha, até a altura do ombro — e, no final da história, Conan retorna de uma missão secreta em Makkalet para descobrir que Yezdigerd ordenou que Fafnir e outros homens gravemente feridos fossem jogados ao mar para morrerem afogados e não atrapalharem no esforço de guerra imperial. Conan responde dando a Yezdigerd a cicatriz de um corte de espada em sua bochecha, a qual o príncipe

turaniano manteve pelo restante de suas aparições em quadrinhos, e se atirou ao mar.

Para as duas páginas finais da história, Barry optou por desenhar apenas cerca de uma dúzia de ilustrações, deixando muito espaço para que eu escrevesse um epílogo em prosa pura ao invés de usar balões e recordatórios. Foi um desafio interessante, e eu me diverti com ele. Foi o equivalente "Conanesco" da vez em que o artista Neal Adams deixou um grande espaço em branco em um quadro dos X-Men e escreveu para mim: "Escreva algo bonito, Roy!"

Com a edição 21, Conan muda de lado na Guerra do Tarim, e é rapidamente (e talvez de forma um pouco inverossímil), incumbido de uma missão por parte de Makkalet que o leva para fora da cidade. De certa forma, era uma história para encher linguiça, prejudicada um pouco por ter outros talentos, mais inexperientes que Dan Adkins, arte-finalizando as últimas páginas com pressa.

Para Conon 22, eu tinha algo especial em mente, e Barry respondeu com entusiasmo.

Desde o começo, eu queria introduzir a contraparte feminina do Conan nos quadrinhos. Não uma companheira costumeira como a Vespa nas histórias do Homem-Formiga/Gigante... mas outra heroína espadachim que apareceria vez ou outra para compartilhar uma aventura com o cimério, às vezes como aliada, outras como rival. Eu até mesmo sabia qual a cor do cabelo dela que eu queria: ruivo.

Essa é uma das vantagens de ter a vida ficcional do herói mapeada para você, pois seu cânone principal foi escrito antes de você nascer: você sabe o que está por vir. Eu
estava ciente que, em alguns anos, Conan iria encontrar a
pirata morena Bélit, com a qual ele viajaria por três anos
(tanto em termos de quadrinhos como em tempo real)...
enquanto, uma década e pouco depois, ele estava destinado a encontrar Valeria, uma aventureira loira, na história
"Pregos Vermelhos". Portanto, eu estava planejando criar
uma espadachim ruiva como contraparte ocasional do
Conan. Se a decisão fosse só minha, eu acho que estava
planejando a chamar de Krimsa.

Mas então, como o destino da ficção iria querer, eu topei com um artigo em um livro que reunia materiais antigos sobre o Conan, Howard e espada & magia. Um rapaz chamado Alan Howard (sem parentesco com Robert E.) escreveu algo chamado "Conan em Cruzada". Não era mesmo sobre o Conan, mas sobre quatro histórias que REH escreveu que foram ou ambientadas durante as Cruzadas ou, no mínimo, poucos séculos depois. Uma dessas era "A Sombra do Abutre", que misturava fato e ficção sobre o cerco de Viena, na Aústria, pelos turcos otomanos em 1529. Alan H. mencionou que o herói da história era um "cavaleiro germano" chamado Gottfried von Kalmbach, mas que ele era tanto desafiado quanto instigado por uma "tigresa russa ruiva que seria a companheira ideal para o Conan. De fato, ela poderia ser demais até para ele." Ele não se importou em mencionar o nome desta "tigresa ruiva russa"... mas eu fiquei intrigado. Ela parecia exatamente o que eu estava procurando - e mais, a trama se passava durante um cerco, o qual poderia facilmente ser alterado para caber naquele de Makkalet pelos turanianos!

Dessa forma, eu liguei para Glenn Lord para perguntar para ele sobre aquela história. Durante o ano passado, eu tinha permissão de tempos em tempos de adaptar essa ou aquela história sem ser do Conan de REH para o cânone do Conan nos quadrinhos... Então essa era apenas a mais recente em uma longa e crescente linha. Glenn sempre concordava nesses assuntos, caso os direitos não estivessem cedidos, e "A Sombra do Abutre" foi publicada apenas em uma revista pulp de 1934 chamada Mogic Carpet.

Glenn me enviou fotocópias da história, as quais eu vi instantaneamente como uma resposta às minhas preces. Foi como se Howard tivesse escrito ela especificamente para se tornar uma aventura do Conan, e a já mencionada "tigresa" se tornasse uma personagem de suporte na sua biografia... pelo menos nos quadrinhos. Seu nome era Red Sonya de Rogatino, e Howard a fez ser irmă de uma personagem da vida real, chamada Sophia, que era amante de uma importante figura naquele evento histórico. Eu decidi mudar o "y" em "Sony" para um "j", e fazê-la uma personagem um pouco diferente... e é claro que tivemos que despachar a pólvora que aparecia no conto... mas mesmo assim, "Sombra" fez uma transição tranquila de um conto não-Conan para um feito do Conan. Meu único arrependimento hoje em dia foi não ter alongado mais e ter feito a história em duas partes.

Barry lidou com as coisas de sua maneira costumeira, passando um sentimento de força e substância para a Sonja. Eu não estava totalmente certo sobre o traje que ele deu a ela: eu gostei da camisa de malha prateada, mas menos em seus shorts vermelhos, que pareciam o equivalente da Era Hiboriana do estilo à época na moda em Nova York chamado de "hot pants". Mesmo assim, não era um grande problema.

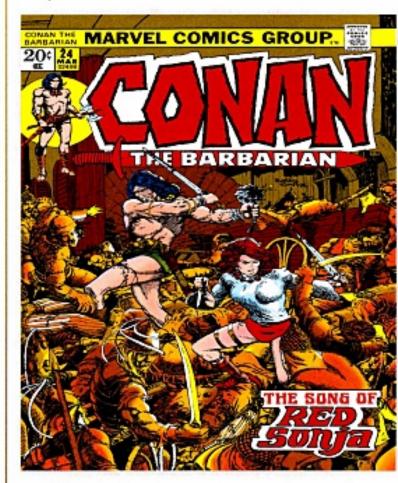
Um maior foi que, por conta de todo o trabalho duro que Barry estava fazendo nessas edições, eu percebi que nós não conseguiríamos entregar no prazo para fazer "Sombra" ser a Conon 22, apesar da capa de Barry ter sido enviada para a gráfica. Então eu aceitei a bronca e reimprimi Conon, o Bárbaro 1 naquele mês, prometendo aos leitores que teríamos tudo novo na edição 23.

E de fato conseguimos... com, no fim das contas, uma capa do Gil Kane. E, por algum motivo... até hoje não sei ao certo... nenhuma das duas capas relacionadas a "A Sombra do Abutre" continha a Red Sonja! Olha só que oportunidade perdida!

Porém, a própria Sonja foi um sucesso instantâneo, com os leitores imediatamente clamando para ela ter seu próprio título. Algo que também estava sempre presente no fundo de minha engenhosa mente.

Enquanto isso, porém, eu tinha outras coisas com que me preocupar. Barry decidiu que ele deixaria o Conon — de novo. Bem, ele estava deixando Conon, o Bárbaro — mas ele disse que estava mais que disposto a trabalhar comigo em uma história preto e branco de Conan para a Savage Tales, agora que Stan decidiu ressuscitar aquele título. Eu aceitei o que me foi oferecido, e coloquei Barry para trabalhar desenhando uma longa adaptação da história curta de Conan, "Pregos Vermelhos", sobre a qual eu falarei mais em outra hora e local.

Já que a edição de Conan 24 seria sua última, Barry fez todo o processo, tanto arte-finalizando como a colorindo. Nós trabalhamos no escopo da história, que revelaria que tanto a Sonja quanto o Conan estavam atrás de uma escultura de serpente reluzente e cravejada em joias — que ganharia vida e seria derrotada por eles, e com a qual Sonja terminaria no fim, levando vantagem sobre o Conan em seu primeiro encontro como adversários.



Pelo caminho, nós tivemos nossas costumeiras (e, sendo justo, bem-humoradas) batalhas com o Comics Code, que insistia para a Sonja ficar coberta um pouco mais durante a sequência de nado dela e de Conan. As mãos do cimério também tiveram que ser redesenhadas naquele quadro. Novamente, cópias fotostáticas da arte original foram preservadas, e você pode as ver na página 721 na seção dos bastidores deste Omnibus.

Foi uma bela edição, possivelmente a mais bem desenhada da série colorida inteira. O único porém para mim foi que, quando eu estava para iniciar o roteiro, Barry me pediu se, na sequência de abertura, eu não poderia ter um personagem menor chamando outro de "wank" [xingamento britânico que faz referência a masturbação — N. do E.]. Eu não sabia que aquela palavra era/é um palavrão inglês; mas eu não havia nascido ontem, então perguntei para Barry para me assegurar se não era uma palavra "suja" na Bretanha, já que aquilo poderia causar problemas para nós tanto com Stan como com o Comics Code. Ele me assegurou que não era.

Ele foi, vamos dizer, dissimulado. A edição mal chegou nas bancas quando nós ouvimos dos leitores de um lado do atlântico até outro que a palavra era muito, mas muito "suja", de fato. Não vimos nenhuma outra repercussão, seja do Stan ou do Comics Code, e a ofensa foi deixada intacta em cada reimpressão subsequente da história... já que, talvez, ela tivesse outro significado na Era Hiboriana que tem na nossa. O maior resultado foi, em meu ponto de vista pessoal, de que, a partir daí, se Barry me falasse que o céu era azul, eu iria olhar pela janela pra conferir.

Acabou que nessa altura, John Buscema estava disponível (e ávido) para assumir o traço da série, preferivelmente com seu irmão, Sal, como arte-finalista. Por mim, tudo bem, apesar de que não estava certo se o resultado final conteria o mesmo "ornato" que eu preferia ver em um Conan pós-Barry Smith.

Ainda havia dois capítulos sobrando, em minha cabeça, para encerrar a Guerra do Tarim: 25 e 26. Eu coloquei John para trabalhar no primeiro capítulo. Conan chegou para ficar: era um gibi que vendia bem e cujos números só subiam... nós ganhamos alguns prêmios de fãs e profissionais como "melhor série" e coisa assim... e havia um burburinho definitivo sobre o livro entre os fãs de quadrinhos.

Conforme John estava desenhando Conan, Stan me chamou em seu escritório. Sua face tinha um leve traço de preocupação. Ele me perguntou: "Agora que Barry saiu, o que você acha que acontecerá com o gibi do Conan?"

Eu respondi sem pestanejar: "Acho que nós ganharemos menos prêmios e venderemos mais gibis".

E tinha plena convicção disso.

Agora, o que digo a seguir não é de forma alguma atirando pedras em Barry, que tinha feito um trabalho magistral com o Conan e, se fosse por mim, poderia o desenhar para sempre. Mesmo assim, eu tinha essa premonição de que, com Buscema desenhando, nós manteríamos os leitores que gostavam da arte de Barry — e atrairíamos alguns outros que nunca haviam sido conquistados por ele.

E acabou que eu provei estar certo. Isso nem sempre acontece, mas aconteceu dessa vez.

Já lá pela edição 26, que era o final da guerra, Sal Buscema teve que deixar a arte-final dos traços de seu irmão porque ele estava recebendo cada vez mais demandas como desenhista. Eu ofereci a John a chance de arte-finalizar o quadrinho por si próprio, se ele quisesse estampar seu olhar preciso sobre a própria arte, mas John disse que, dada a diferença entre o pagamento como desenhista e arte-finalista, ele não poderia bancar desenhar e arte-finalizar o Conan.

Então, após pensar um pouco, passei para Ernie Chan (que então usava o nome "Ernie Chua") a tarefa de arte-finalista regular do gibi. Ernie era um dos inúmeros talentosos artistas das Filipinas que estavam chamando atenção nos quadrinhos na época, geralmente demonstrando estilos ornados e decorativos. Eu sabia que Ernie iria "enfeitar" um pouco a arte, adicionando um tanto de rococó nos detalhes que poderia remeter aos Smithólatras um pouco das virtudes do trabalho de Barry, sobrepostos à virtuosidade técnica de John Buscema, que nenhum outro artista dos quadrinhos poderia desenhar melhor. Além de que, John absorveu o que sentia que queria absorver

do estilo Kirby de desenhar quadrinhos, e se sentiu mais livre em Conan do que no Quarteto Fantástico ou nos Vingadores em combinar aquelas dinâmicas com sua própria abordagem mais ilustrativa. John era um cara que fazia de tudo. Infelizmente, ele não apreciou a arte-final de Ernie no gibi em cores mais do que a do artista filipino Alfredo Alcala na nova revista preto e branco A Selvagem Espada de Conan... mas aceitou que, se ele não ia fazer a arte-final da obra ele mesmo, teria que aceitar meu julgamento sobre quem iria embelezar seu trabalho. Eu mesmo sentia que a nova equipe era perfeita para o que eu queria com o título.

A edição 26, ainda mais que a 25, colocou o livro em seu novo rumo. Eu bolei um segredo relacionado com o humano cativo Tarim que senti que seria um tanto chocante, e se provou tão poderoso quanto eu esperava. Eu não vou falar sobre isso aqui. Leia a história.

Construída sobre a gloriosa (e inesquecível) era da arte de Barry Smith, a equipe Buscema/Chan iria pegar os sucessos de venda dessa era como ponto de partida — e rapidamente o aumentaram ainda mais, ao ponto que, em meados dos anos 1970, Conan, o Bárbaro era um dos títulos mais vendidos da Marvel.

O fundador Martin Goodman pode ter partido pra sempre dos Salões da Marvel... mas eu consegui fazer jus da defesa que fiz sobre publicar um quadrinho de espada & magia naquele memorando que escrevi para ele, mais de três anos antes.

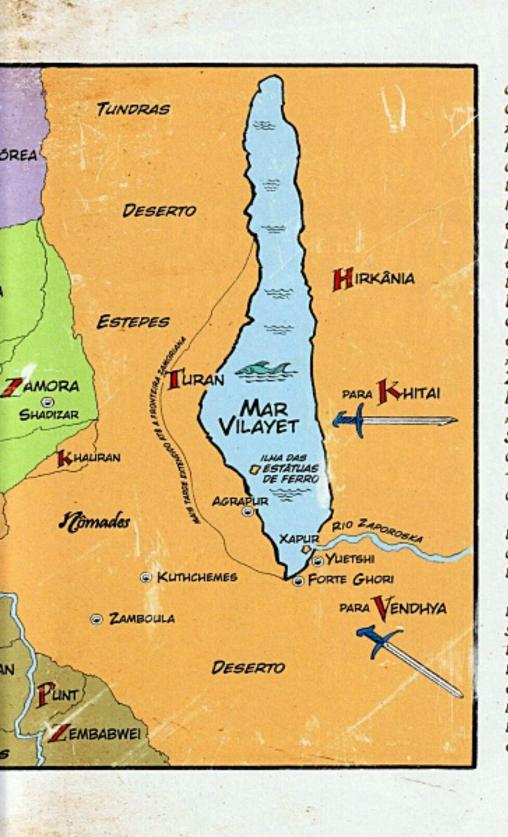
E nós só estávamos começandol

2018

Um admirável adendo: Falando nisso, este incrível Omnibus também está apenas começando! O editor de coleções, Cory Sedlmeier, cavoucou sua tumba hiboriana para localizar o máximo de extras relacionados a Conan, the Barbarian I-26 possível e colocá-los em um tomo deste tamanho, com mais de 700 páginas então, quando você chegar até o final da Guerra de Tarim, continue lendo! Pense em todos esses bônus como o equivalente àqueles easter eggs colocados nos finais dos filmes atuais da Marvel Studios!

Roy Thomas entrou no mundo dos quadrinhos em 1965, e colocou Conan, o Bárbaro e A Selvagem Espada de Conan como dois de seus títulos favoritos como roteirista na Marvel, por pouco não superando até seus amados Vingadores. Ele também escreveu por dois anos uma tira de jornal de Conan no final dos anos 1970 e compartilhou um crédito pela "história" do filme de 1983, Conan, o Destruidor. Em 2011 ele foi eleito para o Eisner Hall of Fame.





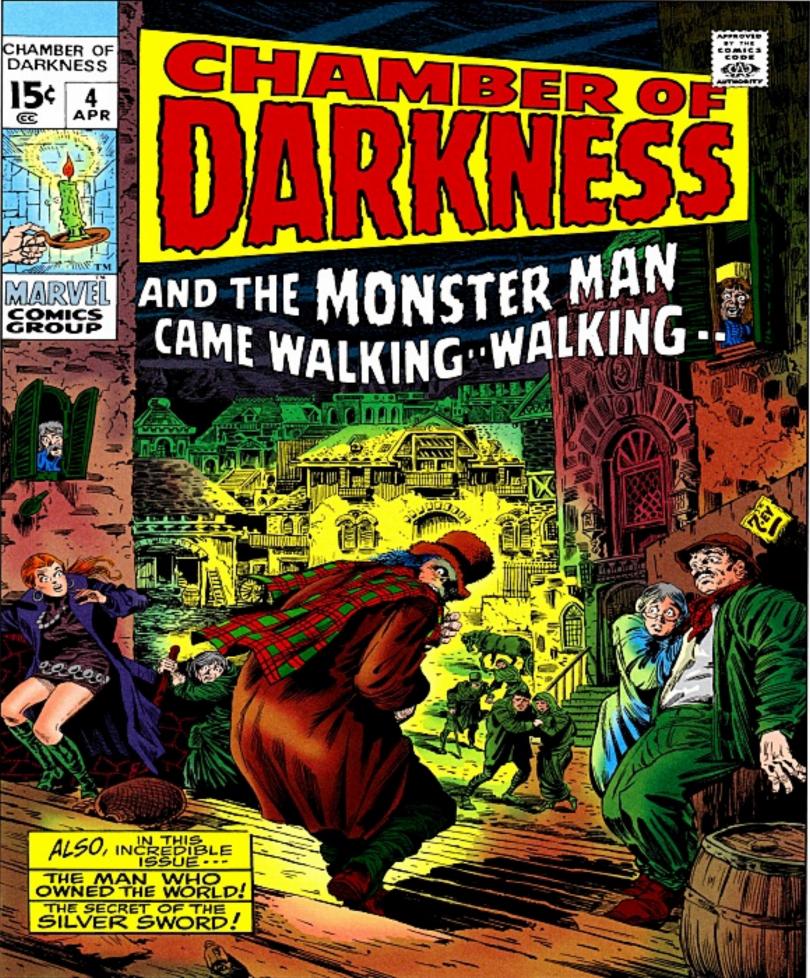
"SAIBA, O PRÍNCIPE, QUE ENTRE OS ANOS EM QUE OS OCEANOS TRAGARAM A ATLÂNTIDA E AS CIDADES RESPLANDECENTES, E OS ANOS EM QUE SE LEVANTARAM OS FILHOS DE ARYAS, HOUVE UMA ERA INIMAGINÁVEL, NA QUAL REINOS ESPLENDOROSOS ESPALHARAM-SE PELO MUNDO COMO MIRÍADES DE ESTRELAS SOB O MANTO AZUL DOS CÉUS - NEMÉDIA, OPHIR, BRITÚNIA, HIPERBÓREA, ZAMORA COM SUAS MULHERES DE CABELOS ESCUROS E MISTERIOSAS TORRES ASSOMBRADAS POR ARANHAS, ZÍNGARA COM SUA CAVALARIA, KOTH QUE FAZIA FRONTEIRA COM AS TERRAS PASTORIS DE SHEM. STYGIA COM SUAS TUMBAS GUARDADAS PELAS SOMBRAS, HIRKÂNIA CUJOS CAVALEIROS OSTENTAVAM ACO, SEDA E OURO.

MAS O REINO MAIS ORGULHOSO DO MUNDO ERA A AQUILÔNIA, QUE DOMINAVA SUPREMA NO DELIRANTE OESTE.

PARA LÁ FOI CONAN, O CIMÉRIO, DE CABELOS NEGROS, OLHAR SOMBRIO E ESPADA NA MÃO, LADRÃO, SALTEADOR, MATADOR, DONO DE GIGANTESCA MELANCOLIA E DE GIGANTESCA ALEGRIA, PARA PISOTEAR OS ADORNADOS TRONOS DA TERRA SOB SEUS PÉS CALÇADOS EM SANDÁLIAS."

- AS CRÓNICAS NEMEDIAS

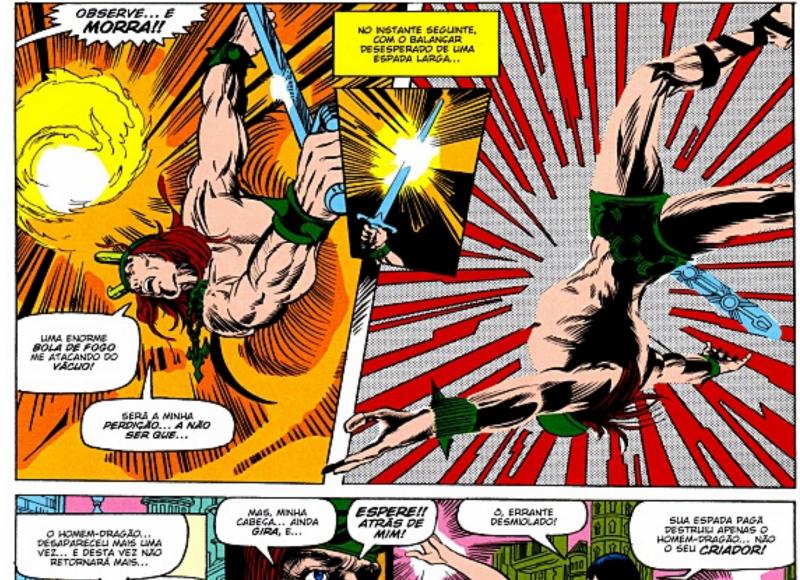
A.C. (ANTES DE CONAN): Seis meses antes de Conan, O Bárbaro, estrear nos quadrinhos, Roy Thomas e Barry Windsor-Smith apresentaram o primeiro herói de espada e feitiçaria da Marvel, Starr, o Matador, nas páginas de Chamber of Darkness #4.

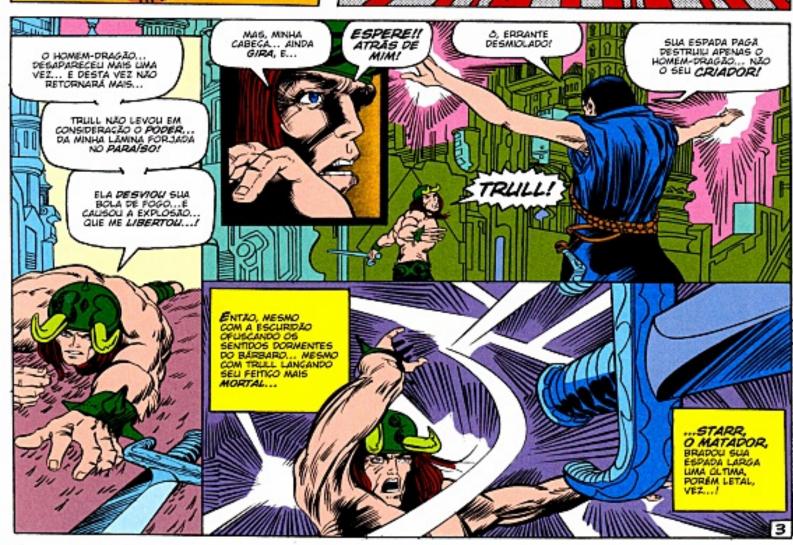


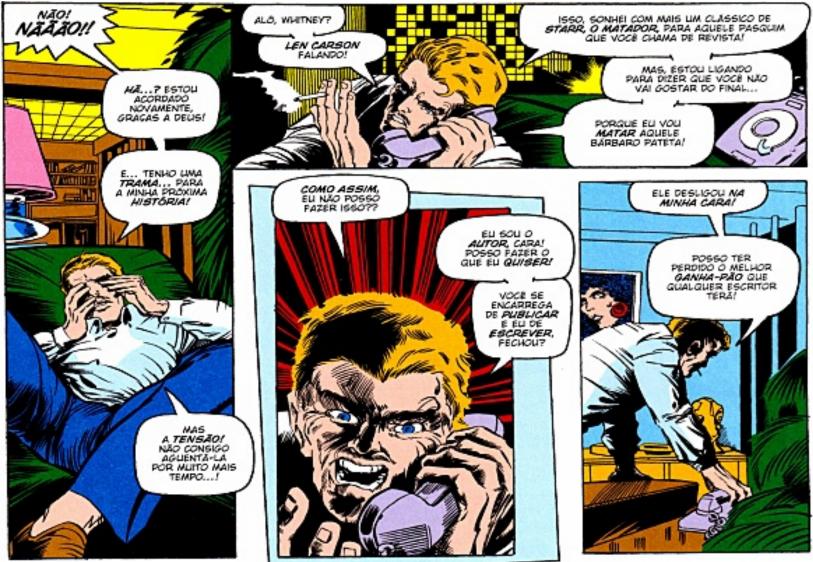
O SOL ENRUBESCEU CONFORME A DURA BATALHA SE DESENCADEAVA... CONFORME **STARR, O MATADOR,** ACERTAVA GOLPE APÓS GOLPE PARA SALVAR A CIDADE SOB SEU COMANDO DO **COLOSSO** ESCARLATE QUE A AMEAGAVA! E, NAS PLANÍCIES PÚRPURAS ACIMA DA PORTENTOSA ZARDATH, O MAQUIAVELICO FEITICEIRO **TRULL** RECITAVA O MAIS PODEROSO DE SEUS FEITIÇOS... AFINAL, ESTE DIA MARCARIA O **ENCONTRO FINAL** ENTRE...











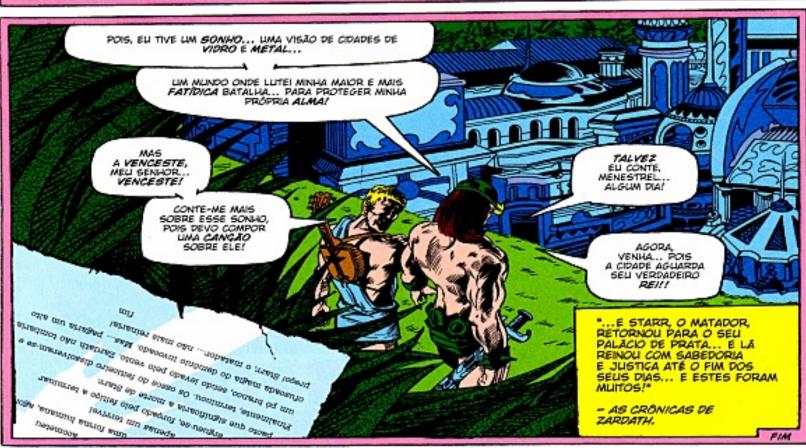


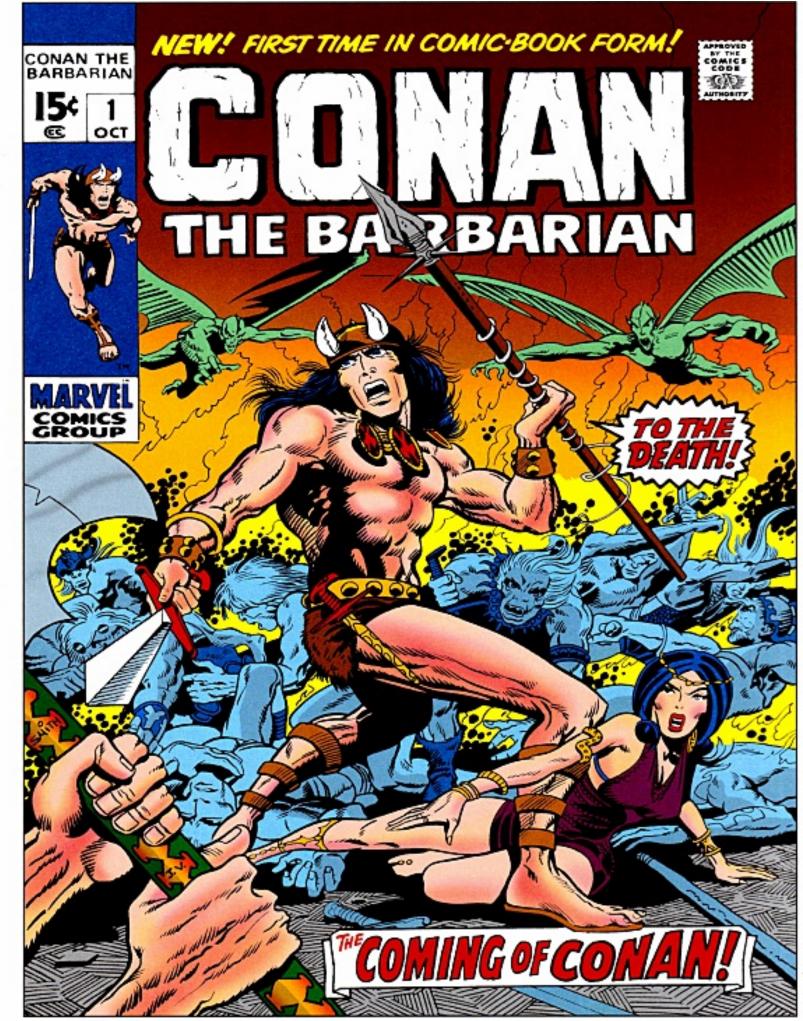














História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 1 (putubro/1970)

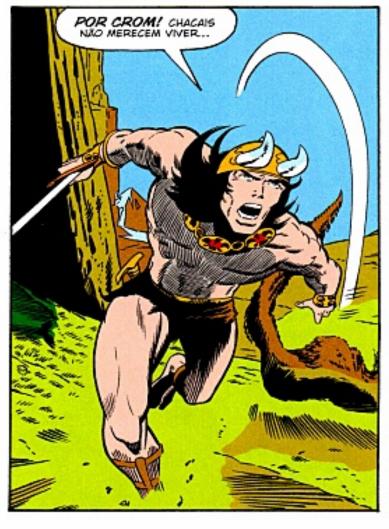




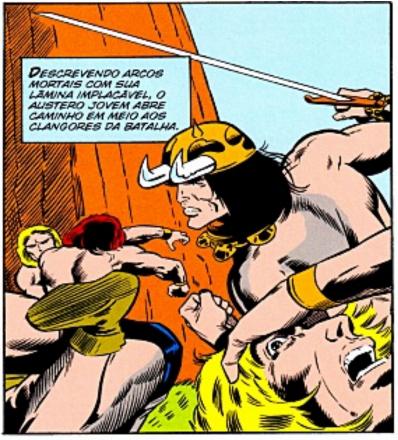


CONAN, O CIMÉRIO... EM TEMPOS VINDOUROS, UM NOME A SER TEMIDO. POR ORA, NO ENTANTO, ELE NÃO PASSA DE UM RAPAZ MUSCULOSO, RECÉM-EGRESSO DE SEU BATISMO DE FOGO NA MONUMENTAL **BATALHA DE VENARIUM.** DESDE ENTÃO, CONAN TEM VIVIDO COMO UM **MERCENÂRIO** A SERVIÇO DE UMA HORDA SAQUEADORA PROVENIENTE DA GLACIAL NAÇÃO FRONTEIRICA DE **AESGAAR**D.



















































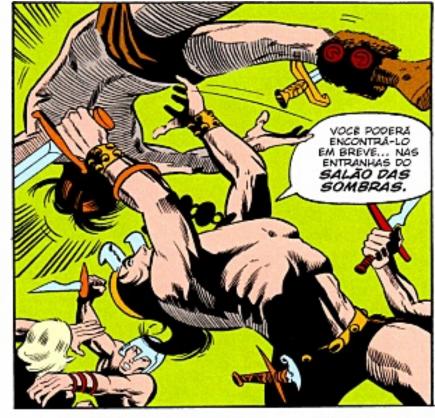










































AOORA, ASSISTAM HORRORIZADOS
AO CATÁCLISMO QUE ABALA ESSE
MUNDO... OS TERREMOTOS E ERUPÇÕES
VULCÂNICAS QUE TRANSFORMAM A
FACE DE UM PLANETA. ENQUANTO
A PRÓPRIA VALÚSIA DESAPARECE
PARA TORNAR-SE UMA LENDA...

...AS ÂGUAS VORAZES DO
OCEANO TRAGAM A ILHA
CHAMADA ATLÂNTIDA!









ENQUANTO ISSO, EMBORA TENHA DESPERDICADO PRECIOSOS MOMENTOS TENTANDO COMPREENDER OS MISTERIOS DO TEMPO E DO ESPAÇO...



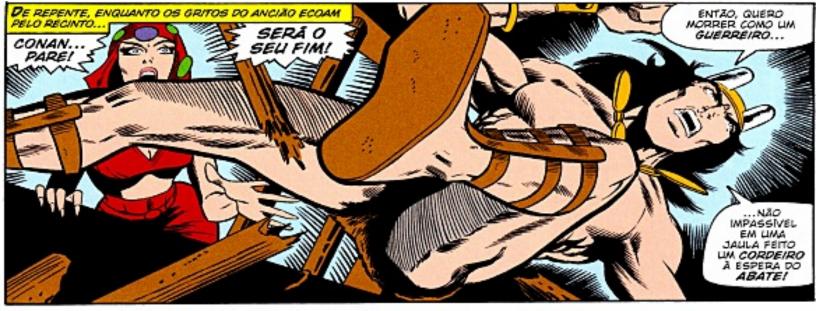
O ALLICINANTE DESPILE DE IMAGENS PROSSEGUE... DESTA VEZ, EXIBINDO O SER HUMANO REGREDIDO À IDADE DA PEDRA... É O INÍCIO DE SUA VAGAROSA ASCENSÃO...















ANTES QUE A SOBRENATURAL ERUPÇÃO TAMBÉM O ALCANCE, O APAVORADO CIMBRIO TOMA NOS BRAÇOS A ESGUIA JOVEM CHAMADA TARA E, TEMENDO BERIAMENTE POR SUAS VIDAS, FOGE EM DISPARADA.



MOMENTOS APÓS, AS CRIATURAS ALADAS DESAPARECEM RAPIDAMENTE NO ABISMO DE ONDE VIERAM... COMO SE FOSSEM GRAVETOS INCINERADOS EM UM HOLOCAUSTO.





...ENQUANTO VOLFF, O ARDILOSO, FINALMENTE PERCEBE QUE TODOS OS SEUS ARDIS SERVIRAM APENAS PARA ABRIR SUA PRÓPRIA VEREDA RUMO A UMA MORTE ABRASADORA.















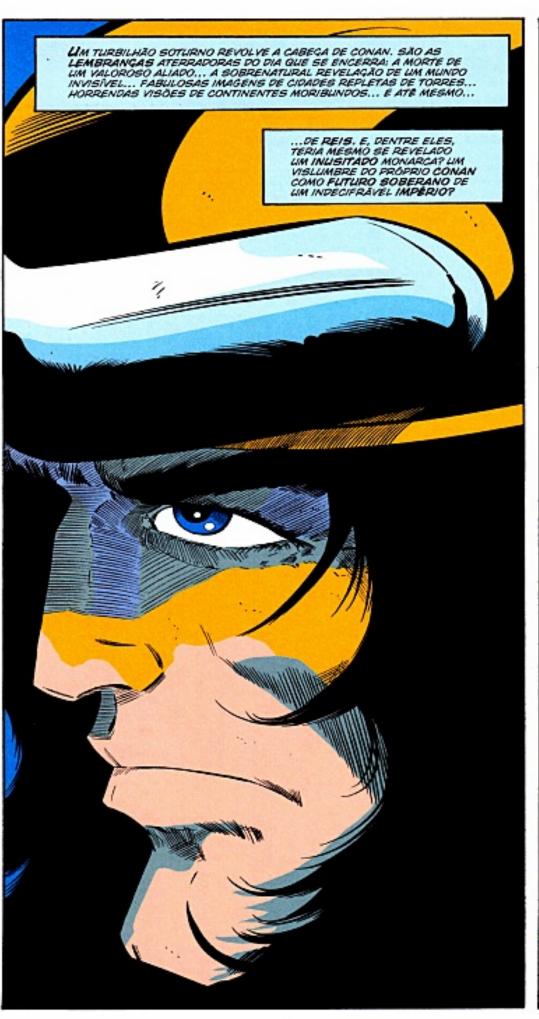






NESSE MOMENTO, CONAN PERCEBE QUE PALAVRAS TORNARAM-SE DES-NECESSÁRIAS, POIS NÃO RESTA MAIS NINGLIÊM PARA OLIVI-LAS. ELE SILENCIA, LIMITANDO-SE A OBSERVAR AS NUVENS DE FUMAÇA QUE SE PROJETAM DA SOBRENATURAL CAVERNA... COMO DER-RADEIRAS EVIDÊNCIAS DAS MACABRAS MORTES QUE ALI FORAM CONSUMADAS.







THE HUBORIAN PAGE % MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

THE WORLD OF CONAN

Conan the Barbarian is the most famous creation of Robert E. Howard (1906-1936), one of the greatest writers of weird fantasy who ever lived. A perfectionist, Howard invented a whole world—an entire eon, as it were—in which his Cimmerian hero could live, and fight, and conquer. This world was the earth of 12,000 years ago—between the legendary sinking of ancient Atlantis and the beginnings of written history—a world in which man still struggled for dominance over the twin terrors of sword and sorcery. A brief outline of that world follows:

To understand the earth as it was in the time of Conon, we must first go back even further—to a time 20,000 years gone. Then, the major kingdoms on the main continent were now-forgotten lands such as Valusia and Grondar, while the barbarians of the great island called Atlantis gradually rose to become a powerful nation themselves—even establishing a foothold on the mainland.

But then, the Cataclysm rocked the earth! Atlantis and its eastern counterpart Lemuria both sank beneath towering waves—and the face of the whole planet was changed! The world sank back, back into savage barbarism once more—then slowly began anew its long, painful climb towards civilization.

In the far North, a tribe known as the Hyborians grew stronger than their neighbors, and gradually spread over the main continent until they had conquered and settled much of it. It is from them that the period derives its name: The Hyborian Age. Over the centuries, new kingdoms rose on the ashes of the old: Nemedia, Zamora, Brythunia, Zingara, and—most powerful of all—Aquilonia.

Of course, even then, there were other kingdoms and traditions as well. In the north were such still-barbarian strongholds as Vanaheim, Aesgaard, Hyperborea, and Cimmeria—the latter being the fierce, frozen birthplace of Conan himself. In the south dwelt the mysterious Stygians (ancestors of the Egyptian pharaohs) and the vital black kingdoms such as Kush—while, to the east, descendants of the ancient Lemurians set up a great empire as the Hyrkanians.

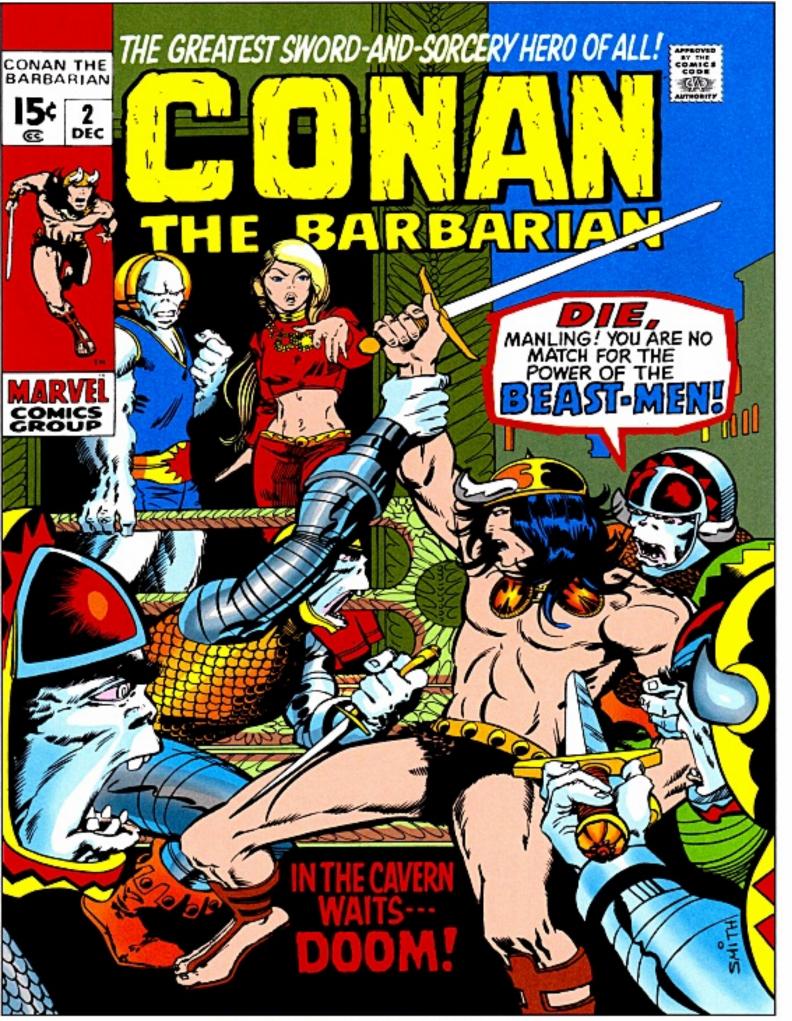
This, then, is the untamed world of Conan—a world now forgotten, but where once a planet stood at the crossroads between the way of civilization and the way of savagery and black magic—a world where a mighty-thewed borbarian could hold the destiny of mankind in his great, grim hands.

LAIR OF THE BEAST-MEN!

Below is a map of the world in Conan's day, based upon a chart given to us by Glenn Lord, literary executor of the Howard estate and one of the Cimmerian's greatest admirers. Though later cataclysms once more changed the face of the globe several centuries after Conan's time, the northern lands stand where do the Scandanavian nations of today—Nemedia and Aquilonia occupy the land where now Germany and France exist—and the east-west path of the River Styx roughly parallels the northernmost shores of today's Africa.







DO PASSADO TURVO E ESQUECIDO DA TERRA... DOS SÉCULOS ENTRE O AFUNDAMENTO DE ATLÂNTIDA E A AURORA DA HISTÓRIA... VEM... E VERÃO NO REINO DO NORTE CHAMADO AESGAARD, POREM, UM ESPESSO MANTO DE GELO E NEVE AINDA REVESTE O SOLO. NESTE MUNDO QUE EXISTIL HÀ MAIS DE CEM SÉCULOS, UM JOVEM DE CABELOS NEGROS AJOELHA-SE TACITURNO DIANTE DE LIMA CRIATURA QUE, MOMENTOS ATRAS, TENTOU EXTINGUIR SUA BREVE EXISTÊNCIA... O GIGANTE ESTA MORTOPORQUE ME CONSIDEROU PEQUENO E FRACO DEMAIS PARA ENFRENTA-LO. MAS QUE ESPECIE DE HOMEM OU ANIMAL È ESSE, QUE SURGIU DO MARA PARA INVESTIR CONTRA MIM?

História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 2 (dezembro/1970)

SAL BUSCEMA BASEADO NO HERÓI CRIADO POR ROBERT E. HOWARD

BARRY

SMITH

ROY

EDITOR .





















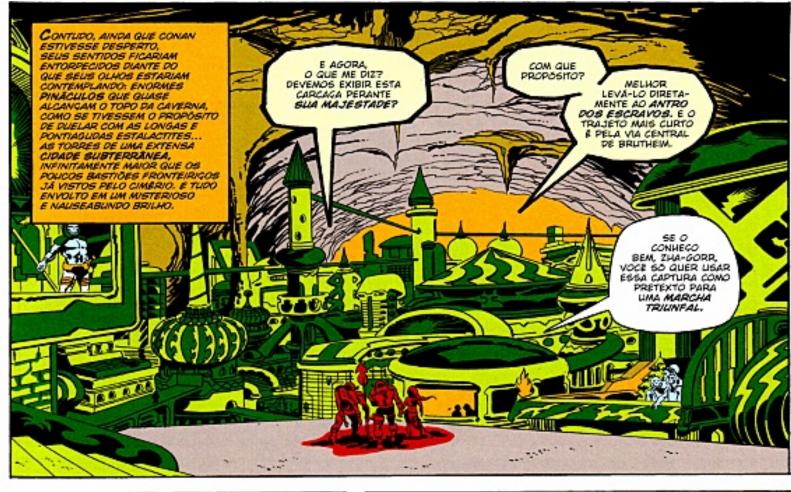


















"NESSE CASO, PRESTE ATENÇÃO, JOVEM NASCIDO NA LIBERDADE.*



"VOU LHE CONTAR UMA HISTÓRIA QUE, DESDE TEMPOS IMEMORIAIS, CADA LÍDER DOS ESCRAVOS TRANSMITE AO SEU SUCESSOR."

"MUITO TEMPO ATRÃS, NO MUNDO EXTERIOR QUE NUNCA PUDEMOS VISLUMBRAR, UM PEREGRINO DE UMA TERRA DISTANTE CONDUZIU UMA EXPEDIÇÃO MILITAR ATÉ AS VASTIDÕES GLACIAIS SITUADAS ACIMA DESTA CIDADE.*

'SUA MISSÃO ERA EXTERMINAR OS HOMENS-PERAS, ANTES QUE SE TORNASSEM UMA AMBAGA A TODOS OS DOMÍNIOS DA RAGA HUMANA."













"E O PIOR: GRAÇAS À MALFADADA INCURSÃO, OS ASTLITOS HOMENS-FERAS DESCOBRIRAM ALGO QUE, ATÉ ENTÃO, DESCONHECIAM: LIMA ARMA, NA CERTEZA DE QUE PODERIAM ASSIMILAR MAIS CONHECIMENTOS DOS INVASORES, POUPARAM ALGUNS DELES..."















































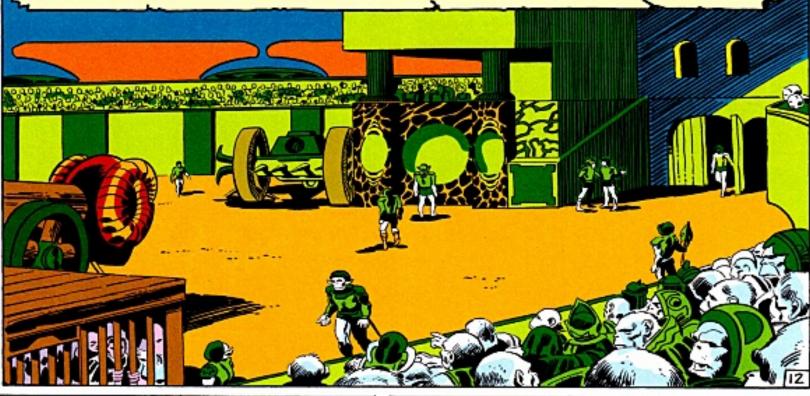






O TORNEIO DE GHA-KREE É O EVENTO SUPREMO DE BRUTHEIM. O ÚNICO FESTIVAL CAPAZ DE REUNIR TODOS OS HOMENS-FERAS DO PEQUENO E SELVAGEM REINO, E UMA OCASIÃO PERFEITA PARA A EXIBIÇÃO DOS PRODIGIOSOS ENGENHOS BÉLICOS QUE, EM UM PUTURO PRÓXIMO, SERÃO EMPREGADOS EM CAMPANHAS DE CONQUISTA DAS CIVILIZAÇÕES HUMANAS.

APINHADOS EM JAULAS DE MADEIRA, OS HOMÚNCULOS SÃO OS "CONVIDADOS ESPECIAIS". AFINAL, NESTA ARENA, OS ESCRAVOS CONSIDERADOS **REBELDES...** E, PORTANTO, NOCIVOS À SUPREMACIA SIMIESCA... SÃO JULGADOS E EXECUTADOS EM COMBATES ATÉ A MORTE.

























QUANDO A MORTE PARECE CERTA, UM DERRADEIRO, EXPLOSIVO E DESESPERADO ESFORÇO LEVA OS MUSCULOS E TENDÕES DO BÁRBARO QUASE AO PONTO DE RUPTURA... MAS ELE CONSEGUE AFASTAR DE SEU PESCOÇO AS PRESAS DILACERANTES.

























































A ESSA ALTURA, TODOS OS ANTROPOIDES SOBREVIVENTES JA FUGIRAM, MUITOS EMBRENHARAM-SE EM OUTRAS CAVERNAS ANCESTRAIS, OUTROS DESAPARECERAM NAS VASTIDÕES GLACIAIS QUE DERAM ORIGEM A SEUS ANTEPASSAPOS, MESMO ASSIM, LÂGRIMAS MAREJAM OLHOS QUE NEM SABIAM O QUE ERA O PRANTO.











THE HYBORIAN PAGE OF MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

SPECIAL NOTE: While the first issue of CONAN THE BARBARIAN was being written and drawn, scripter Roy Thomas (who doubles as Stan's associate editor and sometime busboy) found himself musing over just what some articulate fantasy fans — and professionals, too, for that matter — might think of Marvel's first full-scale fling into the far-out world of swords and sorcery. The answer came in a flash: Why not ask them? But by the time full-color, stapled-and-bound copies could be commented upon, the third issue of CONAN would already be upon us — and Roy had this brainstorm of featuring a letters column in the second issue, don't you see. And so, sets of black-and-white proofs of the first issue were sent out to the kindly, cooperative (yea, even enthusiastic) souls whose names are inscribed below — and their candid comments follow the brief biographical remarks below:

Harlan Ellison is one of the top writers in the science-fiction field today; he collects Hugo and Nebula awards the way Marvel collects Alleys! He is also, it would seem, one of the biggest Conan boosters this side of the late Robert E. Howard himself. Or, to let Harlan put it in his own inimitable way:

People:

Surely he is a dream. It is simply too beautiful to believe we at last have the Cimmerian in a pictorial form on a continuing basis. The world isn't like that; you just don't get your wishfantasies translated into material terms. And even though there will be readers who will say he isn't precisely as Howard envisioned him, even though his first adventure is not quite as compelling as, say, "Red Nails," still, the love and care that went into his first comic appearance can only be taken as positive omens for Conan's long and lusty future. And if this isn't all some kind of cruel joke played by one of the Dark Gods, the Conan comic will flourish and one day soon we can expect to see a pictorial rendition of that incredible story-opening in which Conan, crucified on the desert, wrenches the spikes from his hands to rescue the beauteous slave-girl. We can only thank Roy Thomas and Barry Smith and Stan Lee and Dan Adkins for these treasures. Onward, men!

Harlan Ellison Hollywood, Calif.

Glenn Lord, perhaps the Conan fan supreme, is also literary executor of the Robert E. Howard estate — and the gentleman without whose kind permission there would be no CONAN comic-magazine. His own comments:

Dear Roy.

Barry Smith did a fine job with his artwork. The story, despite the obvious handicap of having to introduce Conan in particular, and the Hyborian Age in general, to the uninitiated, came off very well. I think you worked in the 'background history' quite well, and future issues should be something to look forward to. It's too bad that Howard didn't live to see his literary creation achieve its present popularity. I'll look forward to seeing your adaptation of his "The Tower of the Elephant"; it will be interesting to see how this story adapts to comic form.

Glenn Lord Pasadena, Texas Two of Roy's oldest friends in comics (and s-f) fandom — and occasionally two of his and Marvel's severest critics — are Don and Maggie Thompson, publishers of the comic-book newsletter NEWFANGLES and other comic-art items. They generally give more than is bargained for, so when Roy asked for their comments (pro and con, of course), he was hardly surprised to receive by return mail not one letter but two. Ladies first:

Dear Roy,

My comments on CONAN #1 won't be on the accuracy of fighting, weaponry, or winged demons' aerodynamics. I'm simply a fan of Robert E. Howard — and Marvel Comics — and am speaking as such.

Possibly, Howard's basic elements were action, sex, and horror—just those elements which have to be considerably toned down in comic-books. You've given yourselves quite a job! You may have substituted a bit too much talk for some of those ingredients; the first half was a bit wordy and delayed getting into the situation. In fact, page 6 was totally superfluous and could have been thrown out, tightening the story considerably.

And Barry Smith obviously hadn't yet caught the swing of the art; there were stiff and awkward figures — and the girl's propor-

tions on the cluttered cover were strange, indeed.

But there was enormous promise. The story flowed into an impressive conclusion; the last half was extremely well handled, both in text and much of the art. Possibly, in fact, I'm prejudiced against much of the work in #1 because I've seen some of #2 — and the promise seems to be greatly fulfilled there. What you must take from Howard is, obviously, over-all mood. You've come far already; if you continue to improve at this rate, you should have A Certified Winner ere long.

May Bast keep your house free from mice

Maggie Thompson

And, from husband Don, a reporter for the Cleveland Press:

Roy Thomas,

CONAN #1 is a good start, far better than I expected. I found it hard to imagine a sword & sorcery epic translated into the bloodless pages of today's Code approved comic-books, but you have turned the trick.

The book starts slow and wordy but improves rapidly; by about the second half of the book I became engrossed in the story and anxious about the end. (Here you echo Howard — the introduction of the supernatural element always picks up the pace and quality of his stories.)

Mood is the important factor to Howard and you have caught that pretty well toward the end of the story.

I would say that you can hold your head up when being compared to others who have written of Conan since Howard killed himself in 1936. You are not as good as Sprague de Camp, but the other imitators have fared worse than you.

I hope you will maintain continuity, writing stories in between Howard's and doing occasional adaptations of REH's originals from time to time — but aging Conan slowly and in sequence, instead of jumping from stripling to aging king.

May Ra make his face shine upon thee.

Don Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Rd. Mentor, Ohio 44060

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel mags a month.

T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) — A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner.

Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.

K.O.F.

(Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.

(Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone possessing all four of the other titles.

F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) — An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty. Even before he helped launch his own fan-mag ALTER EGO, Rescally Roy was influenced by the s-f fanzine XERO and its nostalgic series on the great comic-book heroes. In fact, it is this series — including one article eventually contributed by Roy himself — that was gathered together in the long-delayed but increasingly imminent volume All in Color for a Dime, which was co-edited by Don Thompson and Dick Lupoff. The latter, a published author himself, had the following to say about issue #1:

Dear Roy,

Many thanks for the advance look at the first issue of your new CONAN comic. I'd been looking forward to it for a long time, and was quite impressed with the job that was done.

Comics publishers have made a good many attempts to capture the verve and appeal of Conan-type adventure comics. The most comparable one I can think of was the thinly-disguised "Crom the Barbarian" strip in Avon's OUT OF THIS WORLD some twenty years ago. That one was written by Gardner Fox and drawn by John Giunta, and wasn't really too bad — especially the writing; the artwork was slightly primitive but then a lot of comics had primitive artwork in 1950 (and some still have in 1970).

At any rate, I enjoyed your new version, and I'm glad to see someone has cleared the rights so that Conan can appear in his own identity rather than a disguise.

I did think that you went a little too heavy on the combat scenes — panel after panel of guys bashing in each other's heads and slicing out each other's guts doesn't really do too much for me. I liked the mystical fantasy scenes better. The atmosphere came thru pretty well, and I'd like to see a heavier emphasis on this theme rather than the SOCK-BASH-POW stuff in the future.

But on balance, a nice job; my thanks again, and I'll look forward to seeing future issues.

Dick Lupoff
Berkeley, Calit.

From ailing but amiable author August Derleth — himself a a longtime colleague and correspondent of such Weird Tales greats as Robert E. Howard and H.P. Lovecraft — came this brief but welcome note:

Dear Roy Thomas.

The first issue of CONAN THE BARBARIAN has just come in. I've gone through it at once, and I do think that the book manages to catch admirably the spirit of the original. A credible Howardian Conan does indeed emerge in these pages! I shall be interested in watching his development in this medium. Good luck!

August Derleth Sauk City, Wisc.

Ted White, too, is a published fantasy author — and, in addition, is editor of the two science-fiction magazines AMAZING and FANTASTIC. As a longtime and knowledgeable comics fan, he had this to say:

Dear Roy,

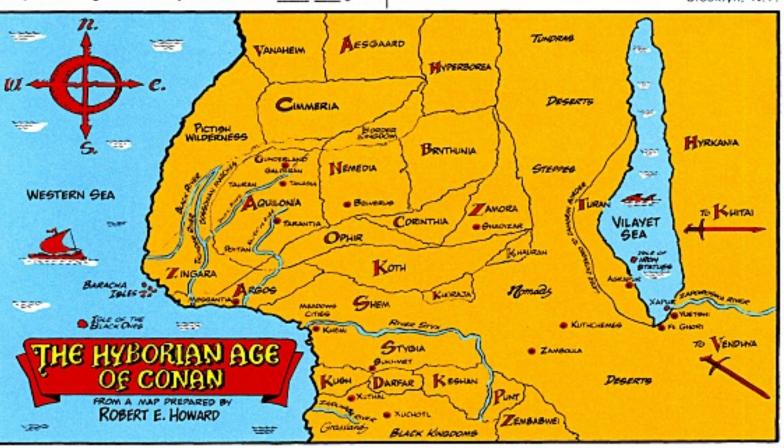
Frankly, I was impressed. Both the art and the story were well above expectations.

As you know, I've had mixed reactions to Barry Smith's earlier art. It seemed to me he concentrated too much on head-and-shoulders closeups (dandruff and all) and too often left his panels without backgrounds. His continuity, panel to panel, also seemed uneven in the past. I'm quite pleased to see that he seems to have licked this problem with CONAN — and if the pencils I've seen of the second issue are any indication, he has at last fulfilled his early promise as an important addition to the Mervel stable of artists.

As for your own writing, I think you're going great guns. This was obviously a story upon which you lavished considerable care, and — I suspect — a good deal of love. As an establishing story it is several cuts above the ordinary, since it manages to weave a completely plotted story as well as to give a foretaste of the CONANs to come. Your attention to detail is fresh and remarkably free of the hoary cliches of sword-and-sorcery writing which have so swamped us in recent years.

I'm not a rabid Conan fan - in the original - but I expect to follow CONAN THE BARBARIAN closely in the months to come.

Ted White Brooklyn, N.Y.



NEXT: THE GREY GOD!





História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 3 (fevereiro/1971)





















NA MANHĀ SĒĞUINTĒ, QUANDO OS VĒNTOS ĒSTIVAIS NĀO VARREM MAIS A TĒRRA, UM CAVALĒIRO SOLITĀRIO PĒRCORRĒ A PLANICIE EM SOTURNO SILĒNCIO.





Ou, quem sabe, sua evidente apreensão se deva à batalha vindoura... e às incontáveis mortes que dela resultarão... RAZOES suficientes para deixa-lo um pouco amedrontado.











"NEM LIM POLICO, BRITLINIANO.
DEPOIS DE LIM TORMENTO
RECENTE ENVOLVENDO CERTOS...
MACACOS... ELI TENTAVA
REGRESSAR À MINHA ALDEIA,
QUANDO FUI EMBOSCADO POR
MERCADORES DE ESCRAVOS
HIPERBÖREOS."



















ENTÃO,

DUNLANG,

ASSIM COMO FOI DESVELADO EM MEUS

SONHOS ...































ENTÃO, POR QUE ESTÁ ACORRENTADO?







































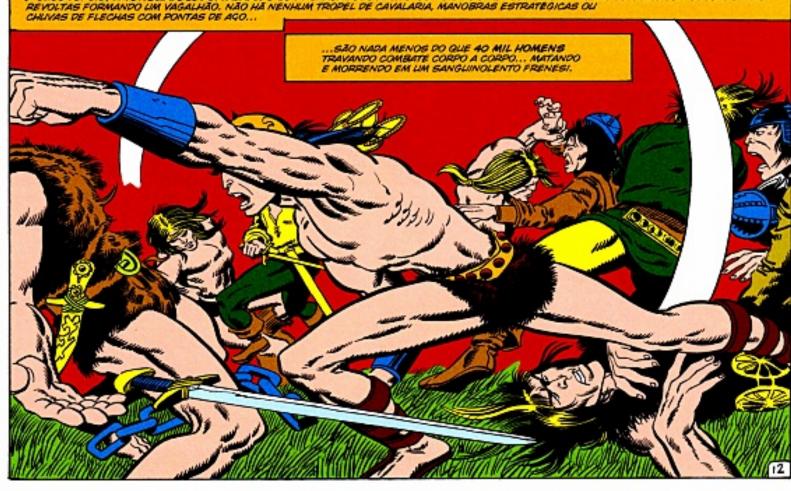








Pouco depois, lim **ensurdecedor alarido** se propada pelo ar... e os dois regimentos engalfinham-se como se fossem ondas revoltas formando lim vagalhão, não há nenhum tropel de cavalaria, manosras estrategicas ou chivas de flechas com pontas de ago...







NO CALOR DA BATALHA, MIRIADES NO CALOR DA BATALHA, MIRIADES
DE ROSTOS ENFURECIPOS SURGEM E
DESAPARECEM COMO AS ONDAS DE UM
MAR AGITADO. DE REPENTE, PORÊM, UM
AUDACIOSO É LOIRO HIPERBÓREO É
RECONHECIDO PELO JOVEM CIMÉRIO,
IMEDIATAMENTE, CONAN REMEMORA O
CHICOTE DE GOLPES TÃO ARDENTES QUANTO AS PICADAS DE UMA VIBORA ENFURECIDA.























































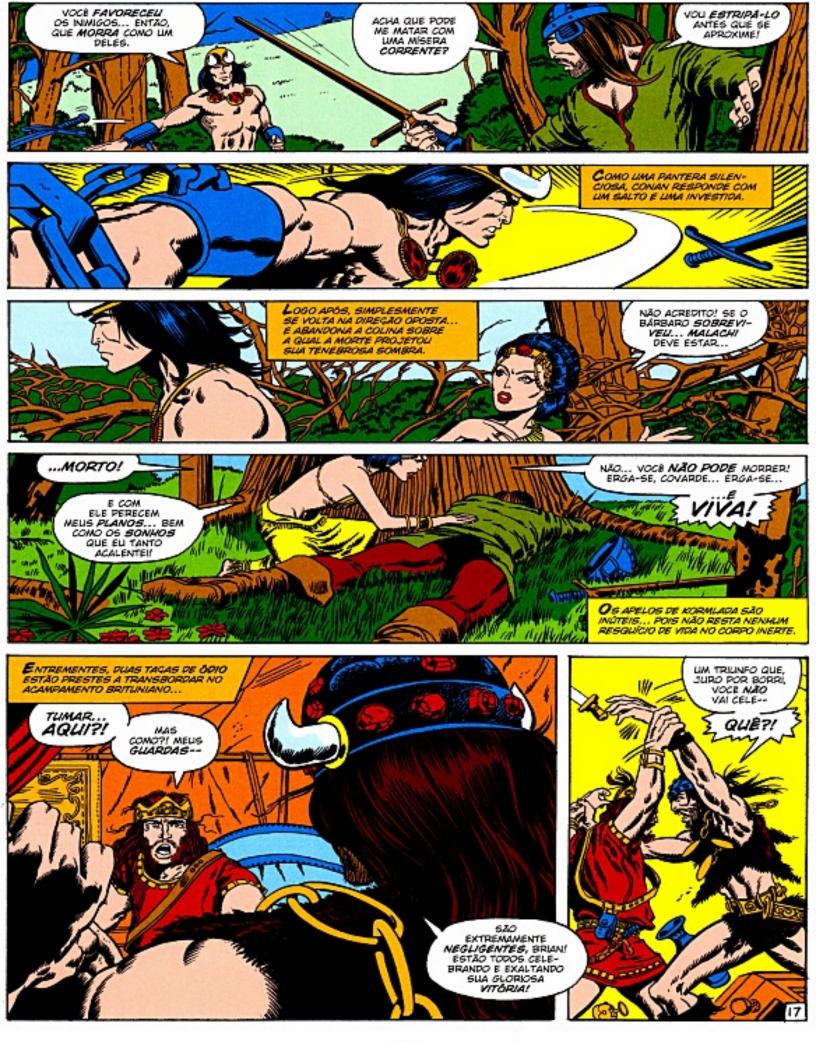




















































HYBORIAN

The first smash issue of CONAN THE BARBARIAN drew an unprecedented number of letters - a multitudinous mountain of mail which ran the critical gamut from extravagant praise to a very occasional out-and-out pan. Since a heavy advertising schedule dictated at the last minute that we feature only a onepage LP this month, we therefore decided to present for your enlightenment and edification a random sampling of excerpts from the missives we've received since CONAN #1 went on sale. Ready - set - GO!

"The best thing that's happened to comics since the FAN-TASTIC FOUR!" - Johnathan Toms, Nashville, Tenn.

"Barry Smith makes Conan look as I often imagine him whilst reading among my complete collection of Conan paperbacks, even though he's not as muscular as the cover suggested!"

- Larry Nunn, New York, N.Y.

"Let's go step by step. (1) The artwork: Unending, exciting action. Barry has hit the peak of his talent. (2) The script: Roy keeps beating himself with each story he writes. Robert E. Howard would be proud himself. (3) Conan: The true barbarian. Hero, but not saint. Young, but experienced. Captureable, but - Jerry Gelb, Miami Beach, Fla. unstoppable."

"Crom! That was some comic! My only criticism was that ! had always pictured Conan as being somewhat taller and - note this - broader!" Michael Jordan, Saginaw, Mich.

'Where does Conan fit in the Marvel world? Is he real or fiction in the Baxter Building?" Paul Sanford (address lost).

"Barry and Roy captured the essence of Conan better than deCamp and Carter in their finish to the series, Conan of the Isles. I think the limitations of the caption space which Roy had were well overcome by the savagery in the art!"

"Barry Smith will soon be the artist to fill the void left by Jack Kirby!" - Jim Griffin, Roseburg, Ore.

"The cover was beautiful, marred only by the single, useless word balloon," - Thomas Anthony, Bethlehem, Pa.

"Now why don't you go all the way and come out with a mag about King Kull!"

"I was stunned! Where was the Conan I knew the Conan who would annihilate any foe, tackle any sorcerer? I saw no such Conan! I saw a frail, thin, long-haired, run-of-the-mill medieval soldier, who runs around fight with a cavalry sabre, not a broadsword! One thing held me on; a tiny spark of light in the darkness! I saw Conan, the Conan I knew if I looked hard enough. I saw the genuine Hyborian Age, complete with authentic scenery, battlefields littered with bodies, and Conan fighting it out with the other survivor! I saw Conan attack, kill, and rise in rank swiftly in a savage mercenary army! There was the Conan I knew! I was overjoyed!" - Randy Holder (address lost).

"Well, you've finally done it! CONAN #1 proves that Marvel is really making it! I never thought it would be possible to adapt such a great action hero into a comic!"

Rob Reiner, El Monte, Calif.

"Just one suggestion: either make CONAN a monthly, or make it 25¢ and twice as large!" - Frank Lynch, N. Palm Beach, Fla.

"Roy, you did a very nice job here, showing knowledge of and respect for the original character." - David Simons, Wallkill, N.Y.

"I notice you changed the original barbarian land of "Asgard" to "Aesgaard" to prevent instant confusion with Thor's homeland!" - Lewis Forro, Savannah, Ga.

"I wish you would send more copies to Albuquerque. I was able to buy only seven copies of issue #1!"

- Michael Arndt, Albuquerque, N. Mex.







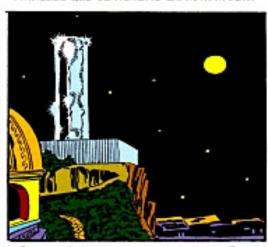
CONAN, O BÁRBARO!

TOCHAS BRUXULEAVAM NA PENUMBRA QUE ENVOLVIA A FOLIA DO MALHO, ONDE CERTOS HABITANTES DE ARENJUN, A CIDADE POS LADRÕES DE ZAMORA, CELEBRAVAM RUIDOSAMENTE A CADA NOITE.

NAS SOMBRAS CINTILAVAM LĀMINAS DĒ AÇO, ENQUANTO RISOS ESTRIPENTĒS DĒ MULHĒRĒS ECOAVAM A PARTIR DAS JANELAS QUEBRADAS E PORTAS ESCANCARADAS... MUITO ACIMA DA CIDADE, COM SUA FACHADA INCRUSTADA DE JOUAS FULGINDO SOB A LUZ ESTELAR, ERGUIA-SE O RESPLANDECENTE PINÁCULO QUE OS HOMENS CHAMAYAM DE...







ORREDOELFANTE

STAN LEE EDITOR ORIGINAL . ROY THOMAS ROTEIRO . BARRY SMITH DESENHOS . SAL BUSCEMA ARTE-FINAL

EN LIM DOIS ANTROS DE ABENTAN, A FOLIA RETUMBANA ATÉ O TETO BAIXO MANCHADO DE FUNDASIDADE, SOB O QUAL DEGOLADORES E CANALINAS DE TIDORAS SI NACOSESTENTANIMA PARA AS PILIPERIAS INDECENTES DE UN ROTILIDA CRIMINOSIOS ZAMORIANOS QUE, DESPE O MASCIMENTO, JA ERAM MUITO MAIS VERSADOS EN SEQUESTROS DO QUE O FANNARRA O KOTINANO JAMAS SONHARIA SER.

JURO DE MULHERES, VINDO DA DISTANTA KOTI COM A PREFENSADO DE TRANSMITTR SEU OPICIO A CRIMINOSIOS ZAMORIANOS QUE, DESPE O NASCIMENTO, JA ERAM MUITO MAIS VERSADOS EN SEQUESTROS DO QUE O FANNARRA O KOTINANO JAMAS SONHARIA SER.

PARA MULHERES VODES

RESIDANDA DE TODOS

PARA DE TODOS

PARA MULHERES VODES

ROPARA A TODOS

PARA MULHERES VODES

ROPARA A TODOS

PARA MULHERES VODES

ROPARA A TODOS

PARA MULHERES VODES

ROBERT E, HOWARD.

História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 4 (abril/1971)











































EMBORA A NECESSIDADE IMPERATIVA DE SE MOVER FURTIVAMENTE ENTRE OS ARBUSTOS LHE RESTRIN-GUSSE O CAMPO DE VISÃO, UMA INDESCRITÍVEL ONDA DE TERROR ASSOLOU O JOVEM BARBARO GUANDO, DIANTE DELE, PASSOU O SACERDOTE.

















MAS, COMO
LIMA MORTALHA, O
SILBNOIO ENVOLVEU
NOVAMENTE O
MISTERIOBO JARDIM.
SEM DEMORA, CONAN
CORREU PARA O
ABRIGO POS
ARBUSTOS...













































FOI O PRÓFRIO INSTINTO SELVAGEM QUE LEVOU CONAN A GIRAR REPENTINAMENTE O TRONCO...



...POIS A MORTE, QUE JÁ SE PRECIPITAVA SOBRE ELES, CHEGARA EM ABSOLUTO SILÊNCIO.















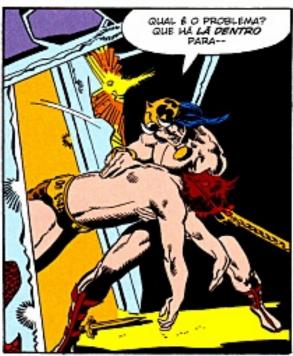










































A ESCADARIA
TERMINAVA EM UM
RECINTO FECHADO
COM PORTAS DE
MARFIM... E DE SEU
INTERIOR EMANAVA
UM EXOTICO AROMA
DE INCENSO.









NÃO SE TRATAVA DE UMA IMAGEM ESCULPIDA POR MÃOS HUMANAS, MAS DE UMA CRIATURA VIVA, CONSTADU CONAN. NO MESMO INSTANTE, LIMA ONDA DE ABSOLUTO HORROR CONGE-LOU O SUPERSTICIOSO BARBARO...



...POIS ELE ESTAVA APRISIONADO NOS POMÍNIOS DA MONSTRUOSIDADE.

















"FOMOS OBRIGADOS A COMBATER
AS COLOSSAIS FORMAS DE VIDA
QUE VAGAVAM PELA TERRA.
SECULOS APOS, ERAMOS TEMÍVEIS
A PONTO DE NENHUMA CRIATURA
OUSAR NOS MOLESTAR NAS
SELVAS ORIENTAIS ONDE NOS
ESTABELECEMOS."



"DE NOSGO RETIRO, NOS VIMOS O HOMEM EVOLLIIR A PARTIR DO SÍMIO... PARA ERIGIR AS RESPLANDECENTES CIDADES DE VALÚGIA É SUAS IRMÃS..."

























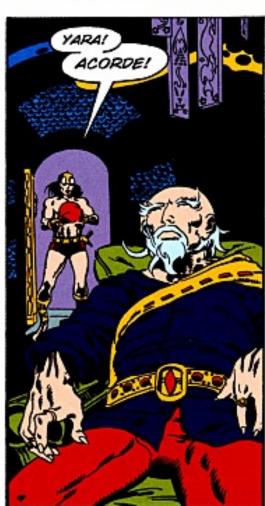






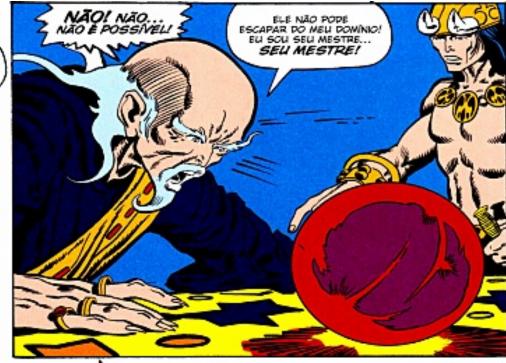


NA PENUMBRA, EM MEIO A VAPORES DE LÓTUS AMARELO, YARA REPOUSAVA COM AS PUPILAS DILATADAS, SEU ROSTO OSTENTAVA UM OLHAR DISTANTE... COMO SE ESTIVESSE FIXADO EM GOLFOS E ASISMOS NEGROS ALEM DA COMPREENSÃO HUMANA.









LEMBRANDO UM HOMEM ÀS VOLTAS COM UM PESADELO, VARA APANHOU A JOIA TURVA. ARREGALADOS, OS OLHOS DO SACERDOTE FITAVAM AS PROFUNDEZAS DA GEMA... COMO SE ALI HOLVESSE ALGO CAPAZ DE LHE ARREBATAR SUA PROPRIA ALMA.













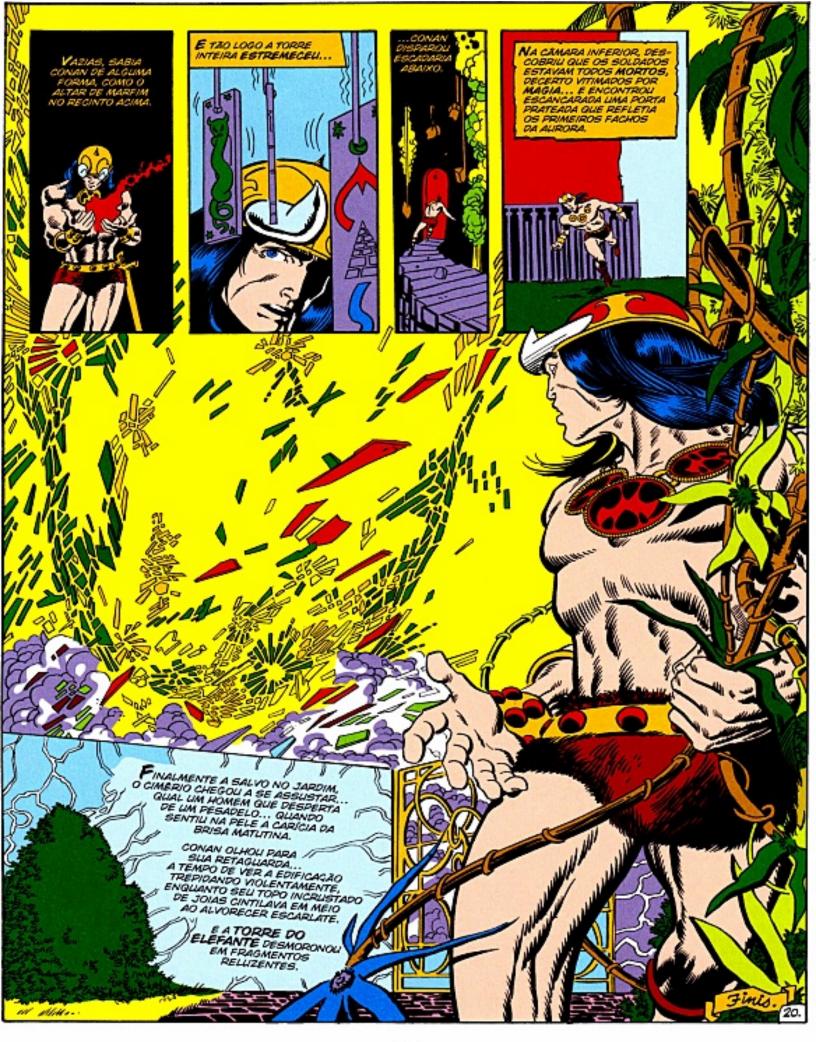












COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

Dear Roy and Barry,

SHADES OF PLANET OF THE APES!!! CONAN®2 surpossed all my expectations. The art, which was much improved this ish, captured the necessary sense of the bizarre, while keeping the story closely connected to the credible world of prehistoric Earth. H.P. Lovecraft had the right idea. He gave most of his stories a realistic backdrop because he felt horror is much more effective when it's presented in such a manner as to make it seem possible. The origin of your Beast-men was based on such a premise. They seemed to have evolved from abominable-snowmen-type creatures (a very probable occurrence). Keep Conan's future adversaries as realistic. Don't stock his world with creatures like those in *1. The more realistic and original your monsters are, the more frightening they'll be. Which do you think is more interesting, Roy: a bat-winged, painty-eared reject from Greek mythology, conjured up from a world which exists inside a diamond shaped meteor by a skinny old wizord, OR, perhaps, a mutant barbarian born to a mortal and an inhuman parent and having characteristics of both parents (like Namor or Wilbur Watley in "Dunwich Horror" or even Christ)? Or perhaps you could even do a story along the lines of "Shadow Out of Time" using an ancient civilization like the one created therein. Do not limit yourself to merely Howard's tales.

Barry's use of radiating lines in the action scenes to emphasize emotional peaks is admirable. It takes the place of overly gary scenes without sacrificing the shock value. (A good example is p. 15 panel 2). Barry's improvements on the drawing of the female form are promising, while his male figures are much improved from their bow-legged, strangely proportioned and awkwardly positioned forerunners. If you keep Conan as humanly real, and his character marred by human faults (such as his mercenary instinct, short temper, and his solitary life-style, which makes him appear unattainable), book sales should be no problem. Conan is a fresh and welcome departure from the normal superhero supervillain syndrome. Make him that brooding, unpredictable barbarian who (as you said) could very well hold the destiny of mankind in his great, grim hands.

By the way, is your artist's moniker for real? It sounds like a put-on to me.

Barry Smith, 156 Hiscock Blvd. Scarborough, Ont., Canada

S'funny, Barry boy-our English artisan said the same thing about youl

A couple of points. Roy wasn't just employing Homeric hyperbole when he referred to Conan's holding the destiny of mankind in his hands—as you will be seeing in upcoming issues. (But don't worry—nobody in his right mind, not even our audocious associate editor—is planning on turning Conan into a word-beating

And one final point on the subject matter of CONAN THE BAR-BARIAN: Robert E. Howard, in his too-short lifetime, wrote less than two dozen short stories about his superb Cimmerian. Roy and Barry have every hope of doing a few more than that and on a regularly monthly schedule, to boot. Thus, they cannot be hampered by having to adhere too closely to a rigid formula such as some readers would try to impose upon us—a formula which would force us to toss an evil sorcerer and a damsel in distress into each issue, or which would limit us either to demons like those in *1 or more pseudo-scientific foes like the ape-men in *2 or gods such as appeared in *3. Rather, they'll be using all three approaches—and making up more as they go along. If nothing else, friend-CONAN should be different from issue to issue. And variety, they say, is the spice of life!

Dear Stan, Roy, and all concerned,

It is my belief that this effort to place the untamable Conan in comic book form is an endeavor that must certainly be approached with caution. I'm sure you people went about your tasks slowly and carefully, since there is so much about Conan and his world which would be difficult (if not impossible) to incorporate into a comic. For instance, you certainly can't be as graphic about sex as some of the stories were, and you cannot display the gory and brutal violence which made the original tales so exciting and amusing. Thus, your task is a decidedly difficult one, and one imagines that you approached the new magazine with caution.

Similarly, we readers must be cautious in our analysis of CON-AN THE BARBARIAN if we wish to also be the sources of sound

Firstly, one must understand your limitations and problems, and come to realize that the Conan of the magazine is not going to be the same exact Conan that we came to know in Howard's stories. It would be absurd to think that you were going to merely take Conan and illustrate him, without changing either him or his environment. Readers must not expect the new Conan to be perfectly in accordance with their private visions of the old Conan, because the new one is being produced by new people, and it is their right and, indeed, their duty to interpret the character as they see him.

This is not to say that Roy Thomas should have license to obliterate Howard's creation. By no means. Rather, Thomas must be permitted room to move, room to expand ideas of his own,

to give new insight into Conan's character.

I feel that this latter bit of business should not be overly difficult. Roy should be able to construct a personality for Conan without intruding on ground formerly laid by Howard. I say this because, in my opinion, Mr. Howard never really endowed his hero with a personality. Conan, up until now, has been a sort of larger-than-life caricature—all spirit and charisma, but no real character development. Thus, Roy seems to be in the envious position of having an established character in his hands-established and popular, but with no limiting personality traits in existence that could conceivably bog down future development. Roy need only adhere to the original Howardian spirit. From there he's on his own.

Tom Steinke, 87 Udalia Ct. West Islip, N.Y. 11795

We were determined to see your letter in print, Tom, even though we had to cut it a bit short, because you've so aptly summed up how Roy and Barry have approached the producing of a regular (now monthly!) comic-mag about the indomitable Cimmerian. Roy owns a number of the original WEIRD TALES pulps from the 30's (in which Robert E. Howard's Hyborian hero made his debut), and he and Barry looked both to them and (more carefully) at the recent mind-staggering paperback covers by Frank Frazetta. However, just as the fantastic Mr. Frazetta himself took considerable liberties with the physical appearance of Conan (making him, for instance, a bit more brutish than even the stories themselves seem to indicate), so did Bashful Barry go unblushingly ahead with his own artistic vision of the character—and so did Rascally Roy try to begin to add a dimension or two to the "larger-than-life" figure you mention.

Naturally, just as Rome wasn't built in a day, it will take our two stalwarts a while to get the proper feel of Conan—and just as naturally, there are some who feel that any line or word not used in an original Conan tale shouldn't be used in the comicbut Roy and Barry are in there trying; and, to judge by the mountain of mail coming in each day on the first couple of issues of CONAN THE BARBARIAN, they're off to a flying (wouldja

believe leapfrogging!) start.





História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 5 (maio/1971)



















































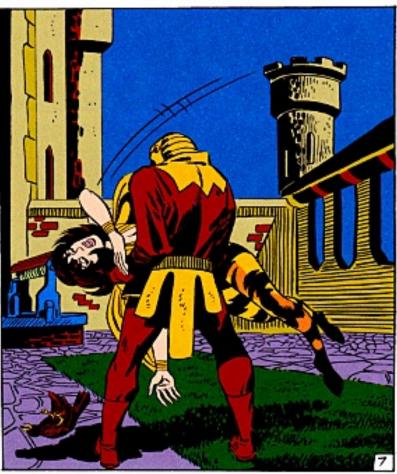


















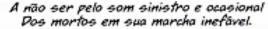




Por toda a longa noite espectral A torre permanece imperturbável...



Ele nunca dorme, e seu olhar è abissal Como os mares revoltos de Falgarai...





Sempre que o vento sopra do leste, E a lua cheia, com seu brilho prateado, Empalidece as joias cintilantes da abóbada celeste...



















































































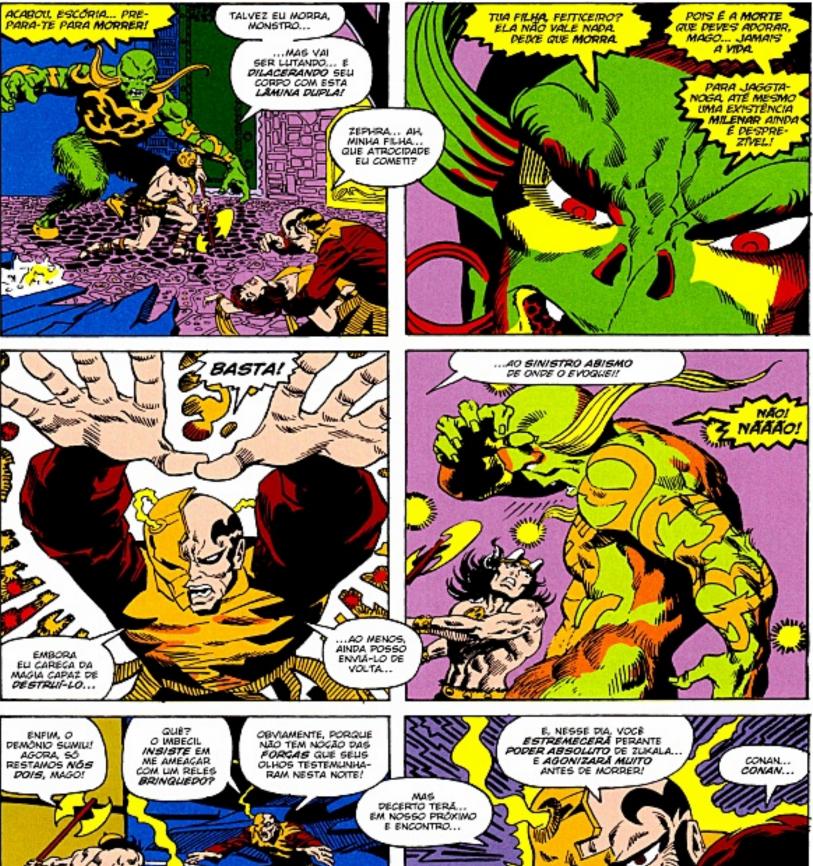




















MAS, NÃO. E MELHOR CONTAR O OURO... MAIS OU MENOS A QUANTIA QUE LHE FOI OFERECIPA PARA ANIQUILAR ZUKALA.

E, MESMO O HOMEM-MAGO TENDO DESAPARECIDO, O RESULTADO NÃO E O MESMO?

NãO HÃ MOTIVO, ENTÃO, PARA RETORNAR AO POVOADO... MOTIVO ALGUM...





SPECIAL NOTE: Our thanks to Glenn Lord, literary agent for the Robert E. Howard estate, for permission to quote in this issue from REH's poem "Zukala's Hour."

This might also be the best place to mention that those persons who are interested in reading more of Howard's prose and poetry than are available in paperback and comic-mag form might wish to order a more-or-less semi-annual publication called THE HOWARD COLLECTOR, which features material by and about the creator of Conan. Single copies of THC are available for 60¢ apiece from Glenn Lord at P.O. Box 775, Pasadena, Texas 77501. Tell 'im-Marvel sent you, huh?

Dear Sirs:

I thoroughly enjoyed the first issue of CONAN, as I have been a fan of Robert E. Howard's writing for the majority of my life. After perusing the first issue, I have but two suggestions: (1) Include a map of Hyboria as a frontispiece to the mags. (One is available.) (2) Make some sort of arrangement to illustrate and scriplize Howard's own stories; they were short enough for the most part to do this, and I don't think that anyone, even your talented group, can out-Howard the Master himself,

If CONAN becomes the success that it should, it would be awfully nice to see King Kull, or even Bran Mak Morn, in addition to the Cimmerian. Keep up the MARVELous quality of your work, not only with CONAN, but with the rest of your stable of heroes as well. (God knows, we need heroes in this too-technocratic so-

ciety of ours.)

Thanks, from a man born out of his time and place.

Warren S. Moore, 7003 Bonnomere Dr.

Hermitage, Tenn. 37076

When it comes to our love for the timeless heroes (and villains) of Robert E. Howard, friend, it's beginning to look as if half the world was born too late—or too soon.

Concerning your cogent points: Practical considerations make it impossible to place our map of the Hyborian Age (which is based on an original one done for Howard by an associate of his, years ago) at the front of the book-but we hope that the back of the mag will do almost as well. As you doubtless know by now, we are indeed adapting REH's originals from time to time (both his Conan and non-Conan tales |- and, in addition, the merry month of March will welcome in a second happy event for Marveldom Assembled: a cataclysmic comic-mag called KULL THE CON-QUEROR, featuring the tales of the battling barbarian-turned-king adapted by Roscally Roy with the aid of artists Ross Andru and Wally Wood-two of the finest talents ever to buckle a mean swash! Miss it not, Mr. Moore!

Dear Marvel Men,

In regarding the comments from various literary personalities regarding CONAN number 1, I was struck by a line from Mr. Glenn Lord. The line is, and I quote, "I'll look forward to seeing your adaptation of his 'The Tower of the Elephant'.'

Adaptation? Adaptation Indeed: With all due respect to Mr. lord, I say thee pay! An adaptation would simply ruin your CONAN magazine to fans like myself who have read almost all the Conan stories in Howard's books. Such a mode of story-telling completely soured me on Gold Key's TARZAN series. Show your true creative genius by writing your own tantasy tales featuring this great character, As of now, I consider CONAN your crowning achievement; so please, no adaptations. Until Thor trades hanmers with John Henry, I remain . .

> Wesley A. Coffing, Rt. *1 Mt. Vernon, Ohio 43050

And we hope most sincerely, Wes, that you'll also remain a regular reader of CONAN THE BARBARIAN. However, both Roy and Barry are really into the Robert E. Howard scene—and trying to keep them from doing adaptations of REH's sword-and-sorcery classics would be like trying to keep the Cimmerian himself from a flagon of wine! Besides, of the many hundreds of letters on this subject we've received since CONAN *1 hit the stands last July, yours is the first and only one which has vetaed the idea of adaptations—and who are we to argue with odds like those?

While not trying to throw rocks at Gold Key's TARZAN adaptations (many of which were rather well-done within their selfimposed limits), Roy and Barry have their own concept of how to adapt action stories to comic-book form, which include a bit more dialogue and a heaping handful of Howard's own prose (both as dialogue and captions). In other words, lad, we're hoping that you dug CONAN *4-that selfsame "Tower of the Elephant" story to which you referred above—but are counting on you to let us know if you didn't, 'Salright?

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

I hope Roy continues to adapt only those Conan stories done by Robert E. Howard. This is not to slight the others who have also written a few Conan staries, but I have a preference for those done by Howard.

Another thing: I'm not going to subscribe to CONAN until it be-

comes a monthly. Get the hint?

Mark DerMarderosian, 230 Melrose St. Auburndale, Mass. 02166

We got it, Mark, we got it. CONAN THE BARBARIAN became a monthly with its fourth issue, thereby tying the record set by SPIDER-MAN several years back. (Note: Though SPIDEY officially went monthly with *5, that fifth issue came out only one month after the fourth, so . . .]

Oh yes, and we might as well mention right away that, for good but private reasons, Messrs, L. Sprague deCamp and Lin Carter have decided that they don't wish to see their own Conan tales adapted—thus settling the problem you mention above. Roy and Barry themselves would have had a ball doing them, but c'est a vie!

However, like a bolt from the blue, several other famous names in fantasy liction have accepted Roy's invitation to write basic plots for Conan, which he and the Bashful One will then adapt into full-scale graphic-ort epics. We don't want to let any cats out of the bag just now by telling who they are—but we think those of you who haunt the sword-and-sorcery racks at your friendly neighborhood bookstore are going to be pleasantly surprised!

"... A wanderer into the far north returned with the news that the supposedly deserted ice wastes were inhabited by an extensive tribe of ape-like men, descended, he swore, from the beasts driven out of the more habitable land by the ancestors of the Hyborians. He urged that a large war-party be sent beyond the Arctic Circle to exterminate these beasts, whom he swore were evolving into true men. He was jeered at; a small band of adventurous young warriors followed him into the north, but none returned."

—"The Hyborian Age," by Robert E. Howard.

Very good, *2; Conan sounded more like Conan. Art was excellent, stary was beautiful. Wow, I think you guys have got a winner, I'm looking forward to your "Grim Grey God."

Still don't care too much for those stubby little horns!

Michael Reaves, 2986 Turrill San Bernardina, Calif. 92405

Then don't miss our next landmark ish, Mike. 'Nuff said.

Incidentally, thanks for giving us an excuse to print the section of REH's immortal "Hyborian Age" essay which formed the basis of CONAN *2. The way it's beginning to look, half the fun of future issues in this comic-mag will be trying to figure out where Ray and Barry dug up the Howard hook to pin a particular story on! Happy hunting, barbarians!

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

I have read a couple of Conon books by Robert E. Howard, and I think CONAN THE BARBARIAN measures up to them with ease. The art in ish *2 was very, very good, and the story was superb.

Just one thing: I have noticed in both issues so far that Conan has been second man. In other words, once he was under Olav, while Kiord was leader of the manlings in *2. Why?

Martin Kader, 68 Kelly St. Battle Creek, Mich. 49017

Simple, Martin. At the time of these early issues, Conan was still a relative youngster, straight out of the hills of his native Cimmeria—and hardly ready to become a leader of men. Time enough for that later. To toss Conan at you as a general or a warlard in the first couple of issues would have violated the basic premise of the series, which is that of a battling barbarian who rises thru the ranks to become first a soldier, then finally the king of a mighty Hyborian nation—as foretold in CONAN *1. Stick around, chum—only forty more years to go until the coronation!

Dear Roy and Barry,

Barry Smith, welcome to Marvel. Roy Thomas, congratulations. CONAN *2, great. Since Barry's "Target Fury" story, his art has improved 100%. His backgrounds have developed feeling and complexity, and, most of all, he has follen out of his imitation Kirby/Steranko lull that tagged along with him for so long.

Roy Thomas has the knack of churning out good stories, and his dialogue on page 18 captured the feel of the scene. Also, his play on words was tricky, I refer to the name Har-Lann and writer Harlan Ellison, and to Zha-Garr and Glenn Lord, Hammam. All this and the advent of periods instead of all those exclamation marks? Roy Thomas, congratulations.

But, one thing can be vastly improved. Editorial policy or no editorial policy. Sales or no sales, get rid of all the titles and word blurbs and balloons, and put out some WORTHWHILE covers! The cover of CONAN *2 was a shame to the rest of the maga-



zine. Conan in chains may still be Conan, while a bad CONAN cover will still be a bad CONAN cover.

May the Black Ones ne'er tread upon your personnage.

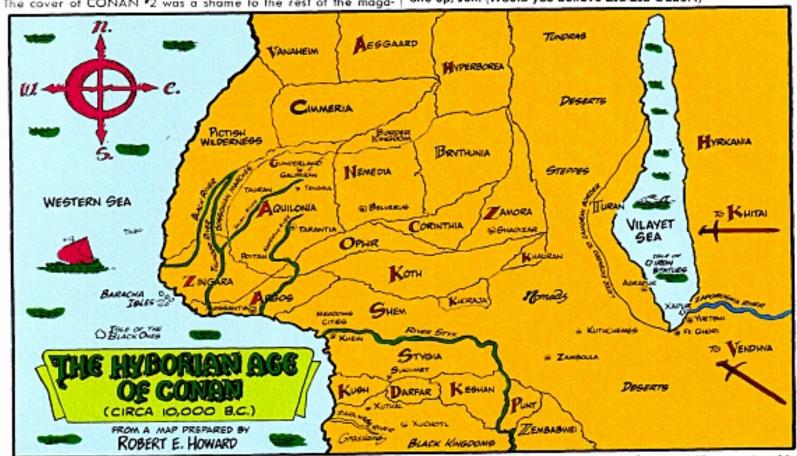
Jeffrey Margan, 77 St. Clare Ave. E.

Toronto 7, Ontario, Canada

And may the Hounds of Tindalos ne'er mistake your domicile for a kennell

You'll note that the last few CONAN covers have improved measurably lat least, we think they have) from that of issue *2, which, to quote our British-born artist, was "just one of those things". And, while we don't necessarily share your views on the matter of blurbs and balloons, we've been more than happy to eliminate them from recent CONAN covers—because we felt the action, the excitement, the power of the pictures didn't need them. Okay?

Oh yes, and about those names. Har-Lann might indeed have borne a slight nominal resemblance to guest-critic Harlan Ellison (note: we said might!). But Zha-Gorr is a name that we got from—from—well, truth to tell, we don't quite know where we dug that one up, Jeff. (Would you believe Zsa-Zsa Gabor?)

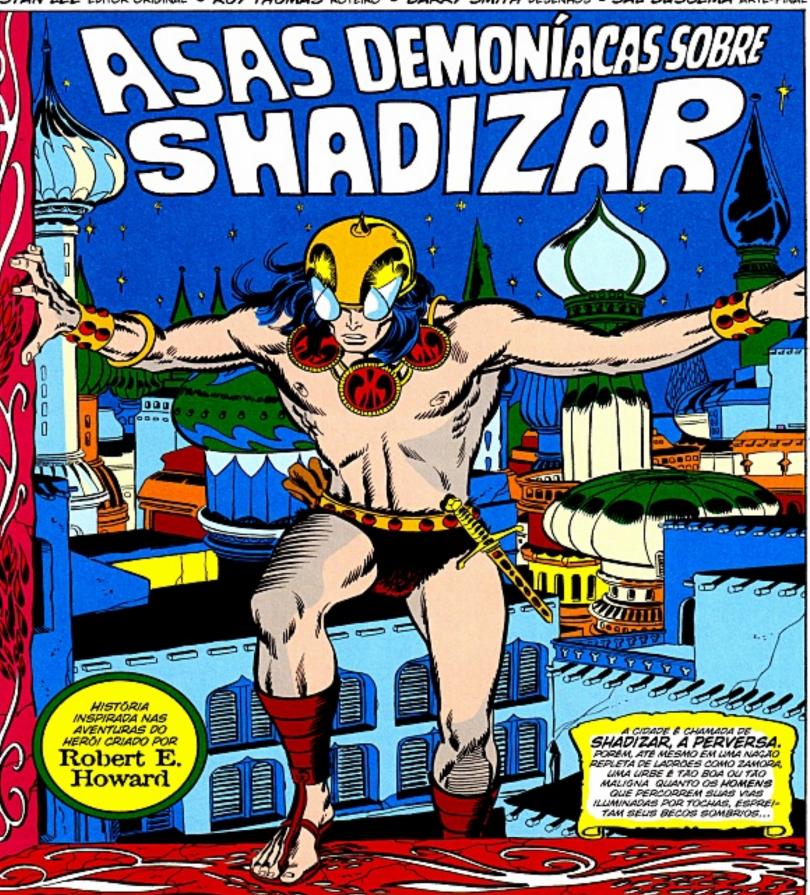


DEVIL-WINGS SHADIZAR!





STAN LEE EDITOR ORIGINAL . ROY THOMAS ROTEIRO . BARRY SMITH DESENHOS . SAL BUSCEMA ARTE-FINAL



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 6 (junho/1971)











































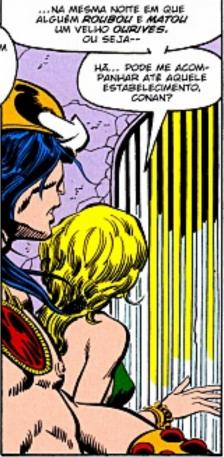


























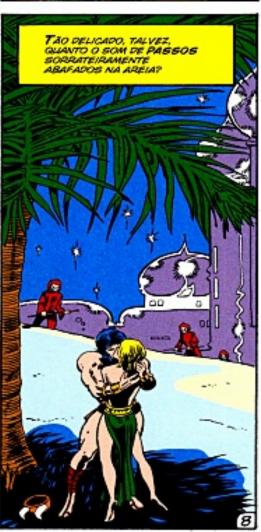






















00000

(9





MAS OS PIDIDOS CRĀNIOS DOS CIMBRIOS SÃO VERDADEIRAMENTE INCRÍVEIS E EM POUCO TEMPO...



























TAL QUAL A ESCANCARADA BOCA DE UM
COLOSBAL PREDADOR, ELA BOCEJA EM
DIREÇÃO AO CEU ESCURO, ENQUANTO OS
SECTÁRIOS DE MANTO CARMESIM PERMANECEM
EM SEGURANÇA EM SEU
INTERIOR...









O PRÓPRIO CONAN SERIA INCAPAZ DE EXPLICAR POR QUE RESOLVEU INVADIR O SANTUARIO.

AFINAL, O CIMERIO SABE QUE ESTA SE EMBRENHANDO NO COVIL DA MAIS TEMIDA SEITA DE SHADIZAR...



...A FIM DE GALVAR A VIDA DE LIMA MULHER GUE ELE MAL CONHECE... OU MORRER TENTANDO.



ENTRETANTO, OS
LÁBIOS DA JOVEM
ERAM TÃO CÂLIDOS...
E SEUS RISOS
SOAVAM COMO UM
DIMINUTO SINO
DE PRATA. E--



UM SINO! O CIMERIO ESCLITA AS BADALADAS ECOANDO DAS ENTRANHAS DO SUNTUOSO TEMPLO...















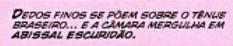








EM MEIO AO REBULNO, A VOZ DE HAJII SE ELEVA NOVAMENTE: TO DEUS NOTURNO SE APROXIMA!*





OS REPIQUES DO SINO ECOAM CADA VEZ MAIS ESTRIDENTES... REVERBERANDO ATÉ SE TORNAREM INSUPORTAVEIS PARA O CIMERIO.



MESMO EM PLENA ESCURIDÃO CONAN É SUBJUGADO POR FORTES MÃOS... MÃOS DE FANÁTICOS... QUE LHE RASGAM AS VESTES E ARREBATAM SUA ADAGA...











TALVEZ AS MÃOS DOS FANÁTICOS DE OLHOS VIDRADOS FOSSEM CAPAZES DE CONTER LIM CIMÉRIO GUASE ENFEITIÇADO...





NESS MOMENTO, LIM PLINGENTE GUINCHADO ECOA NA NOTE... E LUFADAS DENUNCIAM A APROXIMAÇÃO DE LIM VULTO DESCOMUNAL.







Do covil escuro de onde saiu, este deus noturno veio se Fartar da refeição mensal ofertada pelos minguados Mortais que nunca antes o haviam contemplado...



...OS GLAIS, TENPO PESCOBERTO A VERDADBIRA NATUREZA, DIFICIL-MENTE VÃO REPETIR A GROTESCA TOLICE DE ATRAÍ-LO NOVAMENTE.



DESORIENTADA E OFUSCADA PELO FULGOR DO BRASEIRO AMEACADORAMENTE AGITADO, A QUASE CEGA CRIATURA ARREMETE PARA O VÃO LIVRE DA TORRE...





















































COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

Dear Stan, Roy, Barry, Sal, and Sam,

Gentlemen, I bow my head before you. I stand ready to retract every statement I have made during the past two years concerning a decrease in the quality of your product. You have just reconfirmed my faith in Marvel for the next twelve centuries, as you always do whenever I feel you begin to lag.

This time, the miracle-worker was CONAN THE BARBARIAN *3: Issue *1 was unbelievable, especially on Roy's part; his rugged, powerful script carried with it the very essence of the Hyborian Age as Howard envisioned it. Issue *2, however, showed signs of degeneration. Substitute Daredevil, Captain America, or the Panther for Conan-it would still make a reasonable, logical stary. In other words, Conan had begun to degenerate from a sword-and-sorcery type hero into a super-hero a la Cap, DD, Panther, or Ka-Zar. Naturally, I viewed this as another indication of a downward trend which I thought I saw manifested in your other magazines. Before writing, I decided to wait for issue *3 to see if you were definitely beginning such a trend.

Man, am I glad I waited! *3 is the most beautiful piece of work I have ever seen in comic-book form. Roy, you and Barry must have done the first three pages in unison. The beauty of the horsewomen and their horses, the grey god standing against the sky, open and infinite, glittering with stars against the blackness, combined with the awesome, warlike, mystic dialogue to produce a scene equalling and surpassing the Siege of Gondon in the Lord of the Rings, formerly my tavorite scene in all literature, in its wonderment and sense of expectation. I can say the same for the last two pages, which featured the return of Borri and the Chaosers of the Slain. The grey rain against the black sky was a masterstroke of coloring for whoever did it.

And Sam, you did your part too. It has become a habit of yours to place dark borders around balloons to indicate powerful, deep voices. On pages 2 and 3, the dark borders made Borri sound amnipatent, all-powerful and all-knowing, like Gandalf on the bridge of Khazad-Dum.

There was a lot more that was good about the book: i.e., the temale characters were better written. Conan was not an invincible superhero, etc., but I think the first three pages and the last two were alone worth many times the price of the book. The cover, sad to say, was inappropriate and misleading; it did not carry the essence of the story, but instead showed Conan battling Borri and trying to rescue a waman, which he never did.

So may the Ring of Power never lead you into evil, and I name you Elf-friends and blessed-

Jeffrey W. Taylor, 9115 Kirkdale Rd. Bethesda, Md. 20034

And may the Dark Gods of Chaos never picket thy PTA meetings, Jeff. Incidentally, though we're all fans of Slammin' Sammy Rosen (who has lettered all CONANs to date up to this one). it's Stan or Roy or Gerry Conway-whichever of our awesome authors writes a particular story—who indicates to the letterer the shape and style of the word-balloons. (They figure that Sam and Artie have enough to do just trying to wade thru their typos!)

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

Roy Thomas has captured Howard's flavor, and Barry Smith's artwork Improves issue by issue! (Still, I'd like to see John Buscema handle an issue of the Cimmerian, just for fun.)

When I read "Twilight of the Grim Grey God" in the third

issue, the splash page said that it had been adapted from REH's story "The Grey God Passes", so I carefully looked through my paperback collection of Conan-and could not find that title. I'm not saying that I'm a Howard expert, but please explain!

Jack Adams, 1650 Ryan St. Victoria, B.C., Canada

Gladly, friend. One of the unpublished Howard stories left at the time of his death was "The Grey God Passes", which dealt with the adventures of a Conan-like warrior-slave named Conn. Since, as deCamp has pointed out, REH's heroes are mostly cut from out of the same cloth, it was a simple matter to turn Conn into Conan-the god Odin (in the original story) into Borri (which should actually have been spelled "Bori")—and the battle of Clontari (between heathers and Christians) into a Hyperborean-Brythunian free-for-all. Most readers seemed to feel it all turned out well enough—especially the pages at the beginning and end of the story, which followed Howard most closely.

Incidentally, for those of you who are Howard completists, we might as well mention that "The Grey God Passes" is currently available only in a hardback (\$5) edition from Arkham House Publishers, Sauk City, Wisconsin, in a volume titled Dark Mind, Dark Heart, which features stories by H.P. Lovecraft and others as well. And like we said before—tell 'em Marvel sent you!

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

Here's just one more letter thanking you for CONAN THE BAR-BARIAN. Howard's creation is very close to what I had been looking for in comics, but I "hope without hope in my heart", for I fear CONAN will follow THE SILVER SURFER into undeserved oblivion.

Peter Hautman, 1315 Flag Ave. So. St. Louis Park, Minn. 55426

Maybe so, Pete, but it hardly seems likely—since the first issue did well enough for the powers-that-be at Marvel to declare it a monthly mag! And at this point, Stan, Roy, and Barry would like to thank each and every one of the thousands of readers who took the time and trouble to tell us what he thought of that first landmark issue—and of the ones since. (Yes, they're even just a wee bit thankful for those occasional letters with which they totally and unequivocally disagree! How equalitarian can you get?)



KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

(Real Frantic One)-A buyer of at least 3 Marvel R.F.O. mags a month.

(Titanic True Believer) — A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner. T.T.B.

(Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed. O.N.S.

K.O.F.

(Keeper Of the Flame) — One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.

(Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone pos-sessing all four of the other titles. P.M.M.

(Fearless Front-Facer) - An honorary title be-F.F.F. stowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty.





História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 7 julho/1971)









































A NÃO SER QUANDO

SE DIRIGE A MIM, É

CLARO, SER SOBRINHA DO GOVERNADOR TEM

SUAS VANTAGENS.

QUERO

LHE

UM4

COISA

MOSTRAR

ENTRETANTO, HÀ CERTOS MALES GUE

SOMENTE O

DINHEIRO

PODE

REMEDIAR.









"EMBORA KALLIAN BEJA DONO DE INCALCULĂVEL RIQUEZA, A NOCÃO DO QUE PODERIA HAVER NA URNA BELADA ATIGOU BUA COBIGA."

LADY AZTRIAS, EU LAMENTO MUITO NÃO PODER AJUDÁ-LA COM SEU PROBLEMA... MONETÁRIO.

SE NÃO ESTIVER COM RECEIO DE FALAR COM O SEU 1710, TALVEZ ELE--

















































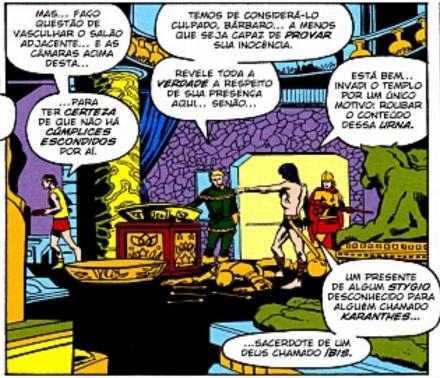










































RIGHEZAS... E, POR DETRÁS DE UM PAINEL DOURADO, UM MISTERIOSO... ROSTO!



UMA FACE QUE ATÉ PODERIA SER A EFÍDIE DE LIMA DIVINDADE ... ESCULPIDA EM MĂRMORE POR LIM EXÍMIO ARTIFICE...



SE NÃO FOSSE POR UM DETALHE.



































































UMA REAÇÃO ESTIMULADA PELA DOR QUE ASSOLA O CORPO DO CIMÉRIO... O LATEJAR NAS TÊMPORAS QUE PARECIAM PRESTES A ESTOURAR... E A DOR ARDENTE EM SEU TRONCO E NA MÃO DIREITA, COM A QUAL ESMURROU UMA CABEÇA RÍGIDA E GELADA COMO UMA PEDRA.















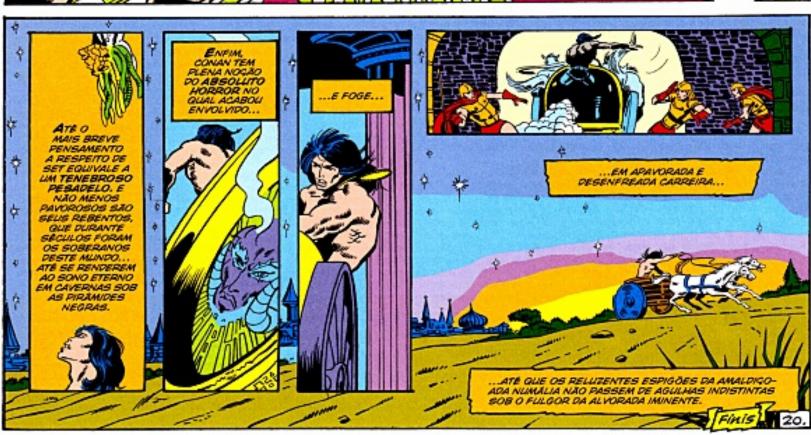












THE HUBORIAN PAGE % MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

Dear Stan, Roy, Barry, etc.

Congratulations on CONAN THE BARBARIAN. Of all Howard's successors and imitators, bar none, you have done the best. As others have said before me, you have captured the living essence of the Hyborian age. The stories are magnificent, and for the most part the art is fantastic. Something that is part of the Howardian magic has been recaptured in this amazing magazine.

I do have one or two complaints, however. For one thing — as others of your readers have noticed — Conan himself does not seem big enough. Even as a youth he was a massive man, though I'll admit that in some panels he seems larger than in others. Conan, as he appears on the book covers Frank Frazetta does, is far closer to my idea of a northern barbarian.

Another point — the panels aren't big enough to give full scope to the grandeur of the scenes they portray. It seems a waste of time when a spectacular scene like the second coming of the Choosers of the Slain (#3) is squeezed into five relatively tiny panels that do not add up to even half a page.

But these things are picayune (as, no doubt, you'll agree) when taken against the whole of the finished product. I was as impressed as when I read my last Howardian CONAN story — and for me that's saying a lot. Well Done! Mike Stamm

Connon Beach, Oregon 97110

Many thanks, Mike — the more so because the "successors and imitators" of Robert E. Howard whom you mention include the likes of L. Sprague deCamp, Michael Moorcock, John Jakes, and a host of other talented fantasy writers.

We'll have to agree with you that Conan should, indeed, be somewhat larger of physique than he has heretofore been — and we hope gradually to beef him up as he (and we) grow older. Stick with us, friend — and we think he'll eventually be mighty-muscled enough for all but the most diehard of Howardophiles.

If that "Howardian magic" you spoke of isn't captured in the pages of future issues of CONAN THE BARBARIAN — we assure you it won't be because Roy and Barry don't approach each and every issue as a brand new attempt to create that most difficult of all things: a comic-book classic, as so acclaimed by you, the multitudes of readers.

By the way, in case we forgot to mention it last go-round, is there anybody out there who doesn't know that CONAN #2 (one of the only two issues of the magazine published in calendar year 1970) was one of the five tales nominated by the newlyformed Academy of Comic Book Arts as best comics story of the year? Not a bad start for first crack at bat, eh?

Gentlemen,

Comic books seldom can be realistic, and a fantasy comic certainly can't be realistic. But if you accept the background assumptions of the comic, it can be realistic enough on its own terms.

Fantasy though it is, CONAN had that realism in its first two issues. I have some criticism of the third issue, though. In the first two issues, it was carefully pointed out for the careful reader that in each of the struggles the numbers of participants were small. When Vanir fought Aesgaardian in issue number one, fewer than a hundred fighters were involved on the two sides together. That much was made obvious; so each fighter counted. When man-ape oppressed manling in issue number two, I had the definite idea that there were no more than one or two thousand apes altogether, and maybe half as many manlings. These numbers

are of course a mere impression, but they make plausible the way Conan won so easily. (By the way, what were the numbers?) But how much effect is Conan's heroism going to have, all in all, in issue number three when he is but one of forty thousand fighters? Not so much, I'm afraid!

As we see, the Brythunians win the battle and defeat the Hyperboreans. But the victory was a fairly close thing. It is no massacre. Yet the last worshippers of Borri and the primitive Hyperborean gods are killed. How can this be, unless King Tomar was virtually the last serious worshipper of Borri? That is not impossible; it could well be that hardly a single serious worshipper of the old Hyperborean gods existed. Religions have faded before. But how can it be that not one single worshipper of the old gods remained alive in Hyperborea? That no peasant in his hut, no slave in his pen, no merchant in the city, nor any noblewoman or lord, worshipped Borri in his heart — yet the brutish King Tomar, who seemed to have no gods at all, still did? It seems Impossible . . .

Well, anyway. Several things worth saying: first, in a saga like CONAN, the use of normal punctuation somehow seems important. It slows down the pace a trifle, makes it solemn and serious — and it fits. Second, I noticed, especially in issue number one, how you kept showing the Hyborian world as underdeveloped, even impoverished. It explains so well why Conan would fight and risk his life daily for the Aesir and others, just for a living! In passing, it also seems to explain why people accepted some pretty sour deals in life, just for a bare living. Third, don't fall, please, into the old comic-book trap of having characters talking when there is no one for them to talk to. Please use thought balloons: people seldom talk to themselves past perhaps one or two short, disconnected phrases. Still less do they talk audibly. That always has been one of my complaints with the comics.

Sincerely, Michael N. Tierstein, 1577 E. 37th St. Brooklyn, N.Y. 11234

But another complaint which many older readers have had with comics over the years, Michael, is the very use of the thought balloons which you would like to see. Thus it was that, though the thought balloon has been the hallmark of mighty Marvel for virutally a decade, Roy Thomas decided to try doing CONAN without them. You'll note that we've cut down those rare sequences where the young Cimmerian speaks to himself — and that, when he does, they tend to resemble (in form, if hardly in eloquence, he blushingly admits) the soliloquy form of an earlier tradition. And that's the way things will probably remain.

By the way, Roy would like herewith to admit most humbly that his original intention (in editing the story, some weeks after writing it) was to cut down the announced sizes of the Hyperborean and Brythunian forces to about one-tenth of the 40,000 you mention — but that, at the last moment, he left the figures which Howard had used in his non-Conan story from which our third issue was adapted. In retrospect, he feels he erred — and he'll try not to make the same mistake again.

However, he does feel that it would take more than one or two random worshippers left alive somewhere in Hyperborea to feed the ego and godlike appetite of the Grey God Borri — so that the latter might well indeed have faded from the scene after thousands of his most ardent surviving acolytes where destroyed in this ancient battle. Our barbarian hero will doubtless return to Hyperborea in some future issues, however — and then, we shall see what we shall see, by Crom!

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel mags a month.

T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) - A divinely-inspired

Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.

K.O.F. (Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.

P.M.M. (Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone pos-

F.F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) — An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty. Dear Stan, Roy and Barry,

Can this be real? Can such grandeur truly exist outside the boundaries of the wildest conceivable scope of imagination? Such were the emotions which circled through my dizzy brain as I picked up a copy of CONAN THE BARBARIAN No. 3. I must admit that I was well-nigh appalled at the very idea of attempting to introduce the sword-wielding Cimmerian into the blood-and-sex-less realm of Code-approved Marvel. Even if such a tremendous challenge were undertaken, how would it be possible to capture the adventure and savagery of Robert E. Howard? But by the seven gates of Valhalla, YOU HAVE DONE IT!!! Yes, by Ishtar, you have successfully accomplished the impossible! Never in the entire history of Marvel has an undertaking of such magnitude been this successful. There are, however, a few things which I simply cannot keep my maw shut about. Not criticism, mind you, but advice. Unfortunately, I was denied the opportunity of your first issue and discovering what the entire torchwaving community was raving about, but I can comment on your second and third issues, and by Crom, I shall.

First (now there's an original line): I was elated to discover that there were no dialogue balloons on the cover of issue three, as compared to issue two. Words cannot sufficiently describe or express my hatred of word balloons which appear without mercy on the covers of most of your more recent comics, and all of them could be done away with. I do not find them appealing at all, and they detract horribly from the beauty of the cover itself. It is not like you, Stan, to mar your works and sacrifice the quality for the sake of a few paltry dollars. So, keep America

beautiful and keep word balloons off the covers.

But, enough of this petty complaining. The character himself you have adapted, for the most part, very well into the comic. However, as any reader of Robert E. Howard's CONAN knows, he was a veritable giant of a man, with swarthy skin and "smoldering blue eyes burning from a scarred, youthful face." I suppose, though, that this could be excused by pointing out that there are tales of Conan when he was still very much in his youth, so he would still be rather pink-skinned and free of too many scars. I know not how to express with enough depth my complete worship (seriously) of the majestic artwork which gushes from the talent-riddled pen of a certain Barry Smith. I greeted the Englishman's renditions of Daredevil with dismay, and of the Avengers with horror. Now I realize that he is one of the best, if not THE best creative artist in his field, and he was merely given the wrong type of work. The pages literally burst with detail and sheer savagery which I have found nowhere else. So, whatever changes you may choose to make, you had best not venture to pull a permanent artist change. Allow me to repeat my warning. Change artists, and not all of the serpents in Set's command shall save

you from my vengeance! Ditto for the inker, Sal Buscema. My last, and what I consider my most important point is this: I feel that it is a good idea to either make this a monthly issue,

or a bi-monthly 25¢ issue, whichever you prefer. Let me caution you, however, if you find that, by doing this, that you are forced to pay less attention to the quality of your mag, then by all means do not do so. I would rather suffer for a month without Conan than to face a disappointment every month. Say, before I forget, is that blood I spy on panel 2 of the last page of Conan #3? Just

So, until Conan is afraid of the dark, until Crom endows all warriors with cowardice, and until Zamora receives a citation for the lowest crime rate in the county, MAKE MINE MARVEL!!!!

EXCELSIOR

David Milner, 134 College Park Drive Monroeville, Pennsylvania 15146

Then 't would appear, Dave, that you've a long and happy

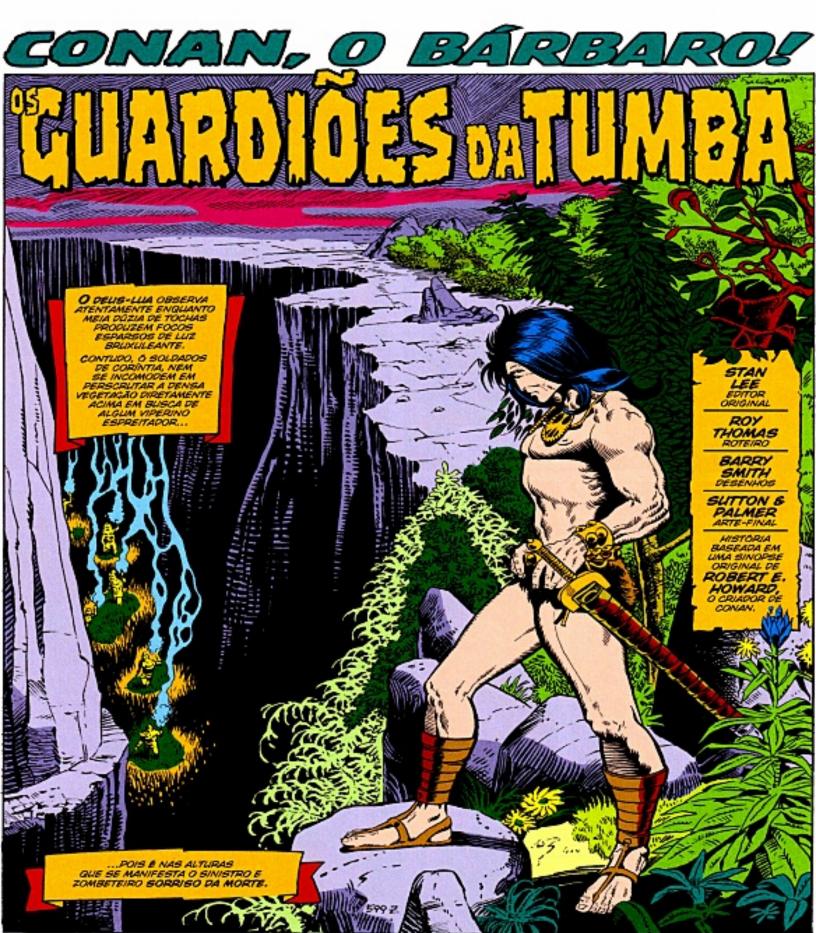
Hyborian Age ahead of you!

Incidentally, Roy and Barry feel that they're going to be able to handle the CONAN magazine even better as a monthly than they could as a bimonthly. To that end, Roy has had to temporarily give up writing his beloved SUB-MARINER, and Barry is no longer penciling the adventures of Ka-Zar in ASTONISHING TALES - but CONAN THE BARBARIAN goes rolling right along! We hope you agree, after perusing this issue's tale, which is a thorough-going adaptation of Robert E. Howard's story "The God in the Bowl" - and which, incidentally, is the result of a several-hours plotting session which Roy and Barry had when the traveling Mr. T. visited London last July! Our two stalwarts decided at that time to treat the story (which would not, in its original form, have made the kind of comics story they wanted) as if they were plotting a screenplay - and the result was the changing of Aztrias from a man in the original story into a woman (for obvious reasons), a lengthened battle with the man-headed serpent of the Stygian god Set, and a number of other items which we're sure you'll be telling them about for the next few months! And, though Sal Buscema inked only the final half of this month's saga (to help out Dan Adkins, who got off to a late start on the issue thru no fault of his own), we hope you agree that Dapper Dan - who inked the very first issue of CONAN - is the most logical of replacements. Excelsion!









História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 8 (agosto/1971)

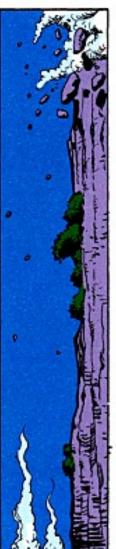
















































SEM DIRIGIR SEGLIER LIM FUGAZ OLHAR PARA SUA RETAGUARDA, O JOVEM BÁRBARO CAMINHA PARA O LESTE, EM DIREGÃO A AURORA QUE SE PRENUNCIA...



FULGOR INAUGURAL SOBRE ... UMA CIDADELA.













EMBORA... LINNEP-

NÃO POR

AQUI.

...E DE UMA CINZENTA GARGULA ASSENTADA SOBRE LIMA FONTE QUEBRADA AGUARDANDO PORTADORES DE ÁGUA QUE NUNCA MAIS VIRÃO.









"DRAGÃO"..., LIMA PALAVRA QUE O BĂRBARO OLIVIU MUITAS
VEZES DESDE QUE SE ENVEREDOU PELAS VIAS HIBORIANAS.
PORÉM, TAL CONCEITO PARECIA SER APENAS LIMA LENDA
CRIADA PARA AMEDRONTAR CRIANÇAS NA CALADA
DA NOITE...







































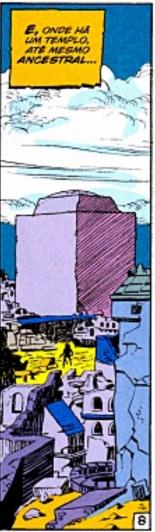


























FIQUE SEGURO





















































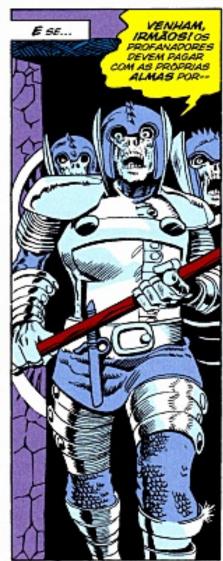




EM SEGUIDA, NÃO HÁ MAIS TEMPO PARA DIÁLOGOS. TUDO QUE LHES RESTA **E FUGIR...**









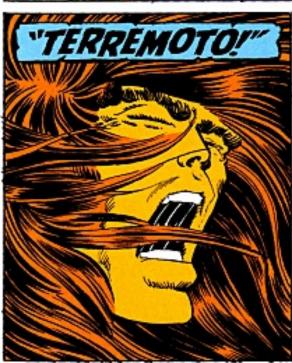






















































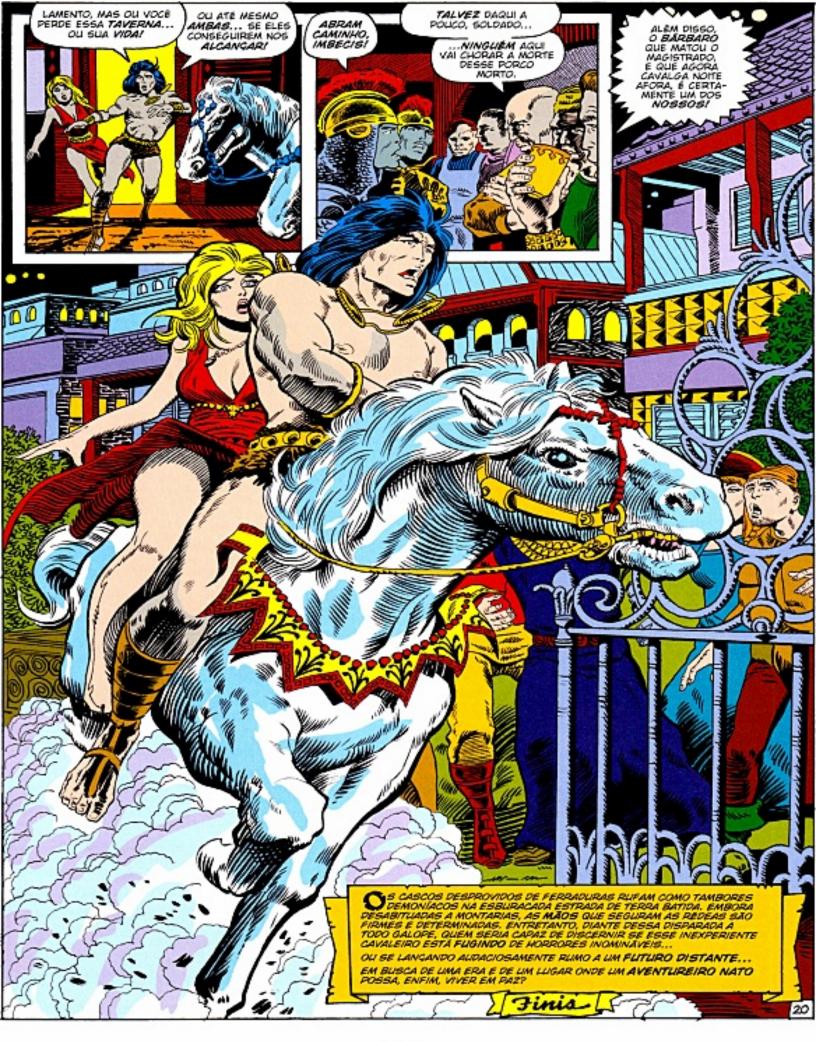












THE HYBORIAN PAGE

Dear Stan, Roy, Barry, (and anyone else who's chained up there).

By Crom!! Superb! Never hath mine eyes beheld such a change in art as in Barry Smith's. In evolving from farces on X-MEN, to fair jobs on AVENGERS, and now to these continuing masterpieces in CONAN, Barry has become, in my opinion, one of your best artists. But he has outdone himself on CONAN #4. "Tower of the Elephant" was one of the best magazines I have ever seen. Hold on to him! Methinks Mr. Smith has been looking over some of my hero Jim Steranko's old mags. He is starting to use (to my delight) Sterankish (?) type, small, balloonless panels, and detailed backgrounds.

Roy's version was, happily, not altered much from Howard's original tale (it's a good habit to know when you've got a good thing), but Roy condensed it beautifully to a mere 20 pages.

As to Conan's future, here are a few suggestions; as Conan gets older, make his face more rugged; get rid of the helmet, he looks wilder without it; and don't get into the purple-pants syndrome of the Hulk's-give Conan different clothes. CONAN is one of your best. 'Till your friendly neighborhood barbarian gets the flu, I remain Marvel's. Pax.

Steve Defty, 7117 Lindell Blvd. St. Louis, Missouri 63130

Steve, we do indeed intend to alter Conan's clothing from time to time (in fact, he's already changed footwear once or twice without fanfare—and in issue #6 he lost, or simply abandoned, the helmet which offended you so—a decision, incidentally, which Roy and Barry made before one single letter had come in asking them to get rid of the helmet—they simply decided they didn't like it much).

However, as long as Conan is more or less a thief and a wanderer, we thought that (realistically) he would wear basically

the same outfit. Later on—well, you'll see.

And a hearty vote of thanks from Roy and Barry for the kind words on script in issue #4, "The Tower of the Elephant." Our awesome adapters put in more than the usual amount of manhours on that one—and 'twould appear that the labor of love showed thru. As these words are written, they're eagerly awaiting reaction to their second Conan adaptation, "The Lurker Within" (based on the story "The God in the Bowl") in Issue #7, since they made extensive changes in that one. Reader reaction will prove—shall we say—instructive.

Only one small point of disagreement: we always kinda dug those couple of jobs Barry did on THE AVENGERS. But, that's

what makes horse-racing-and comic-book publishing.

Dear Stan, Roy, Barry, Sal, Sam,

I would like to make a few short criticisms on your comic CONAN THE BARBARIAN #4.

1) This was the best one so far.

- I liked the idea of showing a chick on the cover, but not finding her inside.
- 3) The cover was at least different from the first three. It seems to me that all Marvel Comics covers are not distinct enough. I always find myself checking the number to be sure that it is the latest issue. Maybe I am blind, yet I know of other people who have stated the same problem.

4) I like the way the text was used to tell the story by the drunken page, on page 5, while the pictures followed Conan. Try

to use more text: it gets one more involved with the story.

 Starting with page 4 you have a night scene which wasn't dark enough. More shadows could have been used. If it were not for the stars in the sky it could have passed for day. (I know I'm blind).



I would like to see what Barry Smith can do without the aid of an inker.

Please, whatever you do, do not make Conan another loudmouth egotistical super-hero.

8) I thought that story was weird and far-out; keep it up.

9) I think that Barry Smith is doing a real good job. I wasn't too sure when I first saw what he was doing because I have read a few of the pocket books with those Frank Frazetta covers. I wanted to see Frazetta do Conan. In other words I was brainwashed to begin with. I really like Barry Smith's style, I dig it.

James L. Moses, 1425 18th Ave. #5 San Francisco, Calif. 94122

To answer your points in order of their presentation:

(1) Thank you. Roy and Barry thought the same.

(2) We hope others felt the same. But how did you dig the spider?

- (3) We try to make our covers as varied as possible, but it's difficult to keep rearranging similar elements each month in a different way. And when we deviate too far from certain standards, we find that the books do not sell as well—which does no one any good, least of all the reader who wants to see his favorite comic continue.
- (4) Roy, too, believes in a fair amount of text in CONAN—but perhaps a bit less than you're advocating.

(5) Point well taken; artist take note.

(6) If you mean you'd like to see Barry ink his own work, you've but to look in the pages of SAVAGE TALES. However, up till now, Barry's been too busy to ink his own stories, for the most part. But now that he's back in the States—well, who knows? In the meantime, what do you think of the job Tom Sutton did this ish?

(7) Conan can hardly become a loud-mouth, since he's sullen and talks less than many heroes. Although Conan varies in character in various R. E. Howard stories (and in speech patterns as well, to some extent), we've tried to establish a basic character for the Cimmerian, and to work from there.

(8) We'll try.

(9) You'll get no arguments from this corner when you applaud the artwork of Barry Smith. Our British-born bombshell labors over each and every page—and we think the result shows.

Like the man said—that's all!

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel mags a month.

T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) - A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner.

Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.

K.O.F. (Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.

P.M.M. (Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone possessing all four of the other titles.

F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) - An honorary title be-

F.F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) - An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty. Dear Stan, Roy, Barry, Sal, and Sam:

I've really got to hand it to you guys for your great job on CONAN, I really like it. However, in your reply to Barry Smith's letter in CONAN #4, you said that Roy and Barry would be using all three fictional approaches to create more stories of CONAN. However, I would like to request that you please try to keep in Howard's tradition as much as possible. Nothing is as good as the original, at least in my mind. Mind, I have no reason to doubt that you would make it most close to tradition, but just a suggestion.

You also mentioned the fact that Howard wrote less than two dozen short stories in his life. Do you know that that great Carter-deCamp team also wrote some stories made from basic outlines left by Howard? I read this in an introduction to one of Lancer's books about CONAN. I think it would be a good idea to stick with the real thing as long as possible before switching,

huh? Again, just a suggestion.

Also, I would like to add a contradictory note to the "other"

Barry Smith's letter:

You see, those characters to which he was referring are, as far as I can remember, characters of Howard's. Of course, I refer to the "creatures" or evil beings in the story. The reason that I can't remember for sure is that I have all but two of my CONAN books lent out. They go like hotcakes, It's a good thing that I read them before I lend them out!

Well, now that I've heard what I sound like, which might not be so good, and have made my point, I guess I had better close. Keep up the good work, and I'm sure that CONAN will be as fine a

magazine as have been all your others through the years. Carl E. Campbell, Jr., R.D. 2, High Hill

Cambridge, Ohio 43725

We hope so, Carl. We hope so.

Meanwhile, you ask if Roy and Barry are aware that Carter, deCamp, and others have also written Conan tales, sometimes from outlines prepared by Robert E. Howard. And other readers have "informed" them about this or that paragraph of which they assume our adapting artisans are ignorant. mind-especially when the pointing-out is done for the benefit of the letter-writer's fellow Marvelites-but it kinda hurts to think that these same letter-writers are assuming that Roy and Barry haven't done their homework on the matter of Conan and the Hyborian Age.

Now, they'd be the first to admit they make mistakes—or even that, from time to time, they have Conan do something which Howard didn't specifically have him do. (But then, REH did

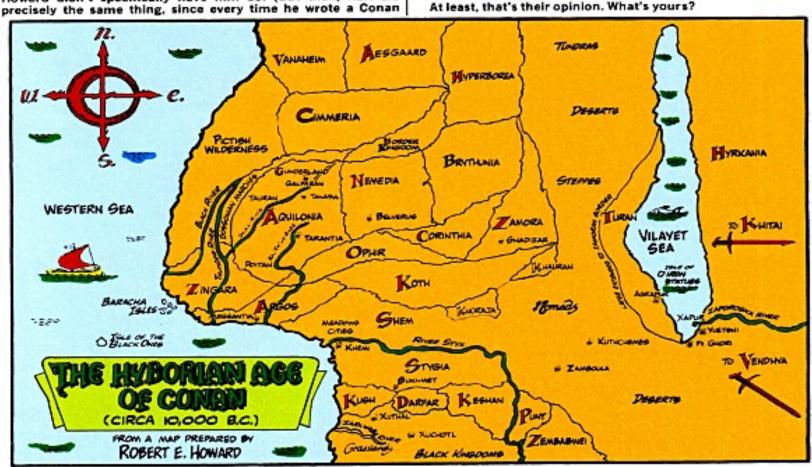


story, the battling Cimmerian added a new event to his life, if not necessarily a new side to his personality.)

However, it's probable that Roy and Barry know more about that fabulous creation of Howard's than most of their readers. Roy, for instance, owns a complete set of everything ever published in hardback edition by Robert E. Howard, including hard-to-find volumes such as Skullface and Others and the poetry volume Always Comes Evening. He possesses a virtually complete set of THE HOWARD COLLECTOR, a sometime publication of Glenn Lord's which features material by and about Howard, much of it previously unprinted. Roy also possesses a number of the old WEIRD TALES magazines from the 30's which contain never-reprinted tales, and has even been able (thru the good offices of Glenn Lord, literary agent for the Howard estate) to read a number of REH stories which have never been published.

Now, Roy'd be the last person to claim that this means he's immune to making a mistake on the character, but you've got to grant him this: he's in a position to know more about the mind and style of Robert E. Howard than the average joe.

By the way, we should add here, Carl, that this is not by way of putting you down-you, or any of the other legions of letterwriters who have offered us advice and criticism on Marvel's handling of Conan. It's just to let everybody and his typewriter know that a lot of time and research goes into each issue of CONAN THE BARBARIAN—and that disagreements with the way Roy and Barry are handling the hero are more likely to be just plain differences of opinion that out-and-out goofs on the part of our author and artist.







História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 9 (setembro/1971)

BASEADO EM O JARDIM DO MEDO, LIM CONTO ORIGINAL DE ROBERT E. HOWARD, O CRIADOR DE COMAN.

BUSCEMA

ARTE-PINAL

ROY THOMAS

ROTEIRO

BARRY

SMITH ILLISTRAÇÕES

STAN LEE

EPITOR ORIGINAL





















































CONAN, ENTRETANTO, NEM



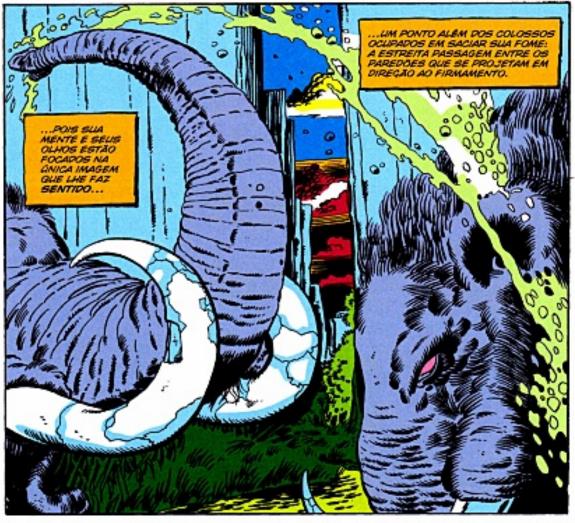




















































































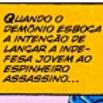


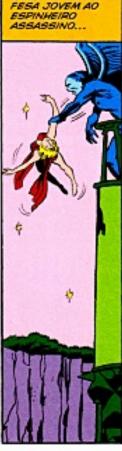












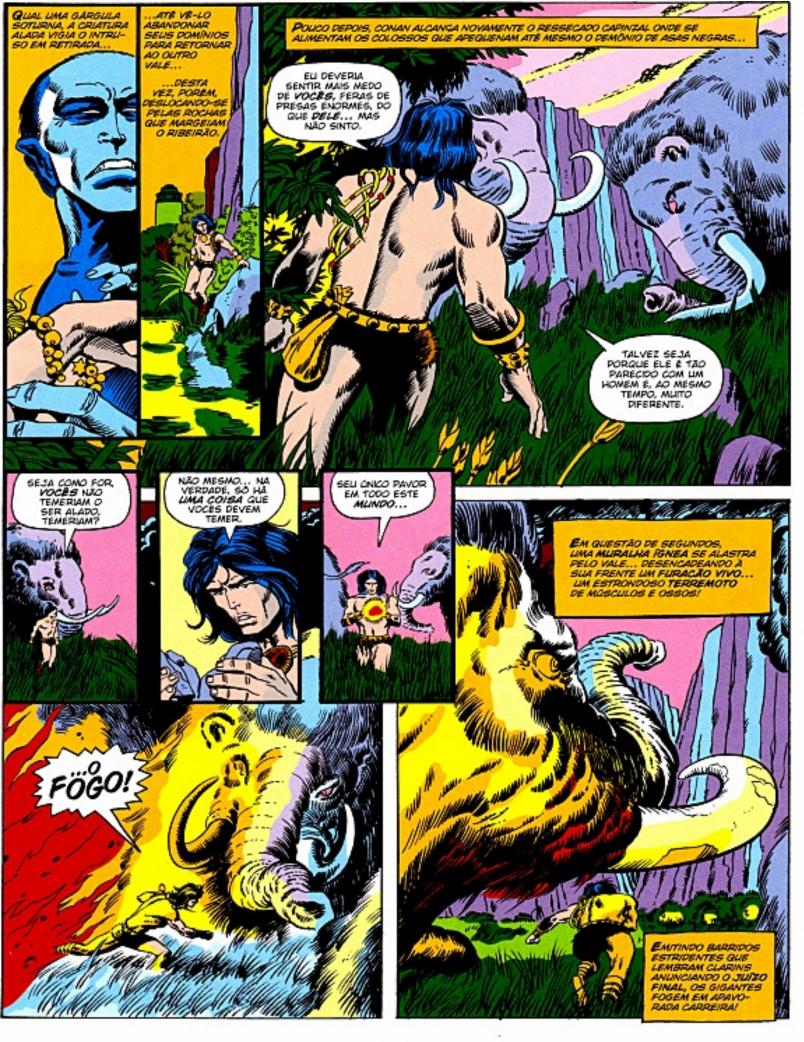




































































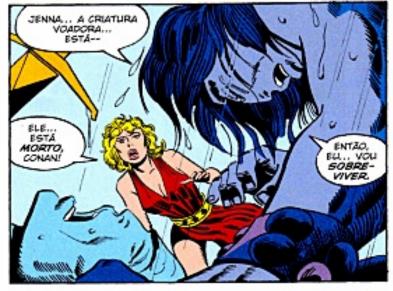






























THE HYBORIAN PAGE

Dear People:

Your adaptation of Howard's "The Tower of the Elephant", in issue #4, was both a skillful graft from one medium to the other, and a sheer joy in artwork. I was sufficiently impressed to warrant buying four copies—a high compliment, on my paycheck.

So far, you've kept to one-issue stories and done consistently well. Let's see how Thomas and Smith can carry off one of Howard's longer novelettes, such as "The People of the Black Circle," or perhaps "Beyond the Black River." An original line developed over three or more issues would be worth trying, too.

Conan #5 was also well done; I hope that going monthly won't result in a decrease in quality. However, one point needs mentioning at length: At the end of "Zukala's Daughter," you have the wizard vanishing with his lovestruck daughter, threatening dire vengeance upon the Cimmerian. A recurring enemy is a good way to boost sales, true, and I've no objection to Zukala taking running snipes at Conan now and then (although, as I recall, the only fairly regular foe he had was Thoth-Amon of the Ring). But I notice an ominous hint (hopefully mere paranoia on my part) of a romantic involvement between Conan and Zephra. Now, a resident nemesis, as I said. I'll go along with reservedly . . . but I am strongly opposed to any sustained sub-plots involving unrequited love. They work well to excellently in your other magazines, but in CONAN they would be disastrous, pure and simple.

Michael Reaves, 2986 Turrill San Bernardino, Calif. 92405

We totally agree, Mike. Thus, even the current relationship between Conan and Jenna will doubtless peter out one of these issues—in a way we know Robert E. Howard would have approved of. (As to how we know this—well, stick around, astute one, and we'll prove it beyond the shadow of a doubt.)

It'll be some time before Roy and Barry reach the later Conan tales in their rhapsodic re-tellings, but in the meantime they have a two-part original story planned for an early pair of issues—one part based upon an authentic yarn by REH, the other an original Thomas/Smith collaboration. Kind of whets the appetite, eh?

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

CONAN #5 was a bit of a letdown after #4. Here, I think, is why: Frank Giacoia is too brutal an inker for Barry's delicate pencils. In #4, Sal Buscema sensitively enhanced Barry's drawings, and the result (along with some incredible coloring) was Barry's career peak in artistic achievement—but only so far.

Aside from the disappointing artwork—and note that I attribute that wholly to Giacoia—CONAN #5 was another masterpiece. Roy's writing was never more crisp or suspenseful—qualities which are always lacking in Stan's scripts (and which no amount of glibness veneer can completely cover). I particularly enjoyed Conan's exclamation, "Do doors mean nothing in this place?"

CONAN is easily your (Marvel's) best work. But please, if you can't get Sal back to ink it, then have Palmer and Giacoia switch off between DAREDEVIL and CONAN. And thanks for making the Cimmerian monthly!

Michael Barson, Box 31, Bowdoin College Brunswick, Me. 04011

Our pleasure, lad. But now, if we can brush aside poor Stan for a moment (while's he's trying in vain to smile thru his glib veneer of tears), we thought we'd best comment on your criticism of the artwork. Perhaps it's just that you don't like fearless Frank's inking period—but there was another factor on CONAN #8 of which you are doubtless unaware.

Namely, our first half dozen or so issues of conan were dialogue-scripted, inked, and printed out of order from the way Barry did them. Just for the record, here is the order in which our bashful Britisher penciled the first eight Conan comic-book tales: #1, #2, #5, (!), #4, #3, #7, #6, then the adaptation in SAVAGE TALES #1. Does that clear up any mysteries, Michael?

Interestingly, a goodly number of Marvel's top inkers have had a crack at CONAN in these first few issues: Dan Adkins, Sal Buscema, Frank Glacola (who's still tops in our book), Tom Sutton, Tom Palmer, And this issue was to add another star to that sky: reckless Reed Crandall, one of the Golden-Age greats of the comics world. However, one of those ever-capricious deadline problems arose, and speed-demon Sal Buscema came to our rescue. Maybe one of these first few issues, huh, Reed?

(Meanwhile, Mr. Crandall's legion of fans can thrill to his first Marvel masterpiece in over a decade in the latest issue of CREATURES ON THE LOOSE—now on sale—as he pen-and-inks a werewolf tale to end 'em all! Miss it not!)

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry.

I'm not one who usually writes letters of praise, but CONAN #5 gave me so much enjoyment that I had to write. After seeing some of Barry's Kirby/Steranko imitations. I became one of his most ardent critics. I became so prejudiced against his art that I find it hard now to believe that I am writing in praise of it. It seems, however, that Barry is finally coming into his own, and his art now is more sophisticated than even the King's was at a comparable time. Three improvements are evident to me: (1) His toning down of the exaggerated proportions of limbs which seemed to go Kirby one better; (2) his better grasp of layouts; and (3) the very good use of shadows, which is just perfect for a mag like CONAN. Another improvement is the wealth of detail present in his drawings, which is proof of the effort he has obviously put into the mag.

Nor are Barry's efforts the only ones evident: Roy's efforts to make CONAN a great mag are also in evidence. In fact, I don't recall so much care being given to the production of any comicmags since the Thomas/Adams/Palmer teamup in the X-MEN series. I realize there might be technical problems, but please, if at all possible, try a Smith/Palmer teamup on art. It can't miss.

Harry S. Fung, University of Calif. Berkeley, Calif. 94703

It didn't, friend—at least, not in the handful of pages which titanic Tom Palmer inked of our last issue when inker Tom Sutton (don't get 'em confused, now!) got slowed down a bit and Mr. P. came to his (and our) rescue. Incidentally, is there any eagle-eyed CONAN fanatic out there who can tell us which four or five pages Tom Palmer inked in issue #8? We'll give you one small hint; they're not all in order, and they're neither at the very beginning nor at the tail-end of the mag. Happy hunting, Hyboriophiles!











História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 10 (outubro/1971)



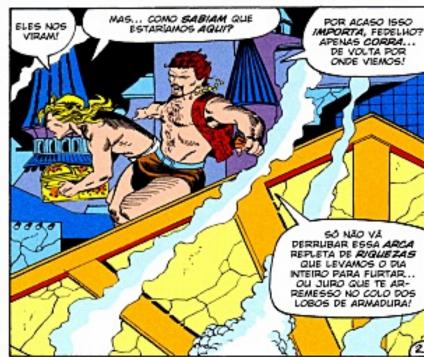
































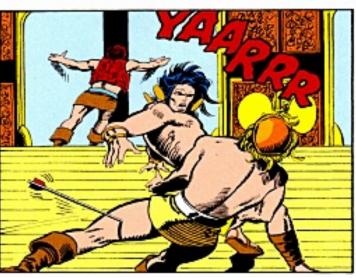
















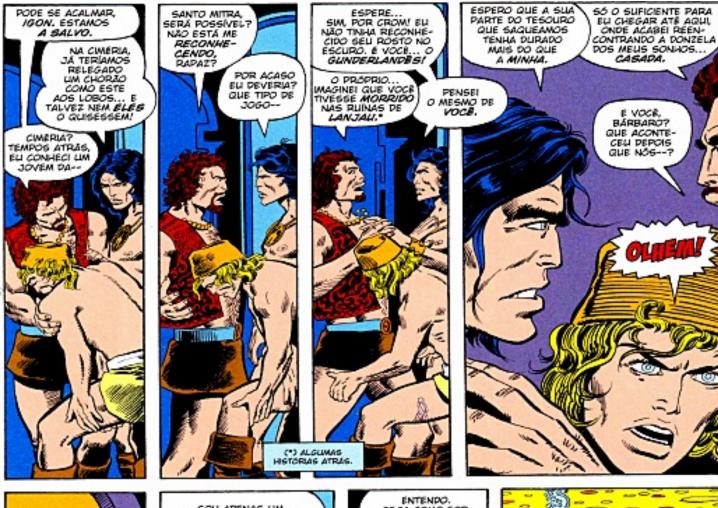


















ENTÃO, POR LIM MBS,

AFOGUE! AS

mägoas em

ESGOTEI DE

VEZ O MEU

OURO.

VINHO... E

























































































































































































































































THE HYBORIAN PAGE

A month of landmarks, this hot month of July 1971:

First: It's one year to the day since CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1 burst like a primeval bombshell upon comics fandom—and immediately laid to rest the prediction made by a top exec of our major competitor (voiced to associate editor Roy Thomas) that it would swiftly bomb out. What's more, we've celebrated our fabulous first anniversary by enlarging CONAN to a gigantic double-size magazine—still another milestone in the brief but happy life of the first truly successful sword-and-sorcery mag in comics history! Even if—Crom forbid—CONAN were to fold its Hyborian tents tomorrow, this past year of mostly-monthly publication would made it a rarity indeed!

Secondly: It marks the inclusion of Kull the Conqueror as an extra feature slated to appear in most (though not necessarily all) future issues of CONAN. We're sorry to see the passing of Kull's own short-lived mag at a time when we haven't the fogglest notion of whether it soared or swan-dived in the sales arena, but we deemed it wisest to put all our sword-and-sorcery eggs in one basket—and watch that basket! Maybe later. . . .

Thirdly: This is the first time we've felt it needful that we correct an error on one of our covers. The blurb thereon states that this issue contains "All New Stories"—but, due to Roy's heavy workload, at the last second he was unable to finish a third original tale scheduled for inclusion—so we've reprinted one of the much-requested tales of Marvel's first s&s washbuckler, the Black Knight, from some years back. In CONAN #11, though, you'll definitely be treated to the first 30-pages-plus CONAN story, an adaptation of Robert E. Howard's "The Rogues in the House"—as if the more astute among you couldn't tell from all the clues implanted in this issue's original tale.

And finally, it marks a rather unusual Hyborian Page, featuring brief comments first about CONAN #6—then about KULL #1—with Bullpen comments following each group of letter-excerpts. Let us know how you dig this format, okay? If we handled all Marvel letters-pages this way, we could feature praises and pans by many more readers in each given mag. What do you think, flame-keeper?

"Devil-Wings over Shadizar" (CONAN #6) is by far your best effort so far, and I congratulate you for a job well done A suggestion, though, Don't portray Conan as being too honorable or goody-goody. His pondering about returning the gold was out of character and smacked of Spider-Man. At least he never returned it, so Roy didn't blow it completely Before your heads swell too large to hear me, I'd like to suggest that you drop all these blondes. They didn't have Lady Clairot back then, and blondes were a definite minority. At least limit them to a few Just the same, when the Alley Awards are handed out for 1971, I wouldn't be too surprised to see this issue cop the award as best story of the year!

Gary Robinson, 1409 Waco St. Troy, Ohio 45373

Far out! The storyline of CONAN #6 was a variation of the normal "Hero Meets Girl Who Is Endangered By Bug-Eyed Monster And Saves Her." But then, diamond, as well as charcoal, is a variation of carbon. This issue was pure blue-star!

Stoner Owens, 737 1/2 W. North St. Springfield, Ohio 45504

I must write a letter of protest to you people. Don't get me

wrong I think CONAN is one of your best mags, BUT—on page two of issue #6 you struck a low blow at every fantasy-lover in the world. Here are two characters, obviously patterned after the Grey Mouser and Fafhrd (Blackrat and Fafhri Come on now, you can do better than that!) You simply have not done justice to the twain. If Leiber were not alive, he would most likely turn over in his grave!

"The Grey Mouser" 1320 S. University #28 Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104

My criteria for judging the worth of a Conan story is a simple one: if I laugh a lot while reading it, it's usually good. The laughter is not of the mocking sort, but rather an anticipatory kind of thing: Whenever someone rouses the Cimmerian's temper, I start to chortle appreciatively, knowing that carnage is mere seconds away Well, I laughed a great deal during "Devil-Wings over Shadizar." The battle with the thieves on pages two and three, and the brawl in the tavern, were perfect, Without a doubt, here was Conan, the genuine article, filled with his usual avarice and explosive temper. While remaining faithful to Howard's original concept, here was a portrait of Conan that offered unusual depth, the type of depth that Howard often (though not always) neglected to display. Conan's feeling of bewilderment at civilized ways, his impulsive decision to rescue Jenna, his hesitation when faced with the mysticism of the Night-God's cult-all this was in character, yet was presented in such a way as to make Conan perhaps more human than I have ever seen him One last thing: Are "Fafnir and Blackrat" purpose parodies of Fritz Leiber's magnificent Fathrd and Grey Mouser? If it was a joke, it was a pretty clever one. If it wasn't, well, too bad you didn't think of it.

Tom Steinke, 87 Udalia Ct. West Islip, N.Y. 11795

I can be silent no longer . . . When I first discovered Conan in the county library at age ten, I fell madly in love with the hero of that lost world. Let it be known here and now that Barry Smith's Conan is the same Conan that the eye of my imagination drew twenty years ago—and as for Roy, he should definitely put in for adoption as Howard's literary son. The second thing, however, that must be brought to light in this day of Women's Liberation is the fact that I add to believe (hopefully erroneously) that the fandom of CONAN THE BARBARIAN is limited to the masculine world. However, if this is true, there are a lot of women who don't know what they're missing, and here's at least one female who has fallen hopelessly under Conan's spell.

Mrs. Raylene Balinton, 234 E. 89th St. New York . N.Y. 10028

CONAN #6: For once, people were not robots; people were people! Conan was not a muscle-bound puppet out to get the "bad guys"; he was just a human being like the rest of us. For once, a man was drawn with nipples on a hairy chest. Jenna was clever, wily, and independent; Conan was moody, a bit naive maybe, but very real. Drunks, muggers, people infested the issue—and was I glad! After all the wooden dummies that have cluttered up the comics for years, this is refreshing! Again—thanx!

Marco Aidala (Address Withheld)

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

- R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel mags a month.
- T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) A divinely-inspired
- Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.
- K.O.F. (Keeper Of the Flame) One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.
- P.M.M. (Permanent Marvelite Maximus) Anyone pos-
- F.F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty.

Fabulous: the only word to describe CONAN. After the Silver Surfer left your ranks, there didn't seem much to Marvel. But with the advent of CONAN and now of KING KULL, my faith is restored. Up to now, CONAN #s 4 and 6 have been your best issues. If Jim Steranko's improvement is any indication of what we can expect from Barry Smith, then you are going to have just about the greatest new artist anywhere!

Ron Sorrells, 2595 Victory Ln. Medford, Ore. 97501

To tell the truth, I had never heard of Conan or Robert E. Howard until your comic-book. After reading #I and #2, I went right down to the bookstore and bought the volume Conan, published by Lancer Books. Now, I know that some of the CONAN readers prefer to keep our hero in a sword-and-sorcery comic, and so do I—but, just once in a future issue, couldn't another Marvel hero go back in time or something like that?

Paul Daly Palo Verdes Est., Calif.

Your current CONAN (#6) was superb, and it in my opinion comes the closest yet to the heroic, blood-and-guts genre that 'Howard's hero has typified. There was a marked improvement over even the previous issue, both in plot and in artwork; I was happy to see a little blood this time, something sadly lacking previously . . . If I can presume so much as to say it, the artwork was consummated lovingly by a master of the art (hats off to Barry Smith) . . . If the art and plots continue in this depth, you'll have again set out upon the road you charted lo, these decades ago, to the literary greatness that transcends the confinements of a medium by carrying its message to the imagination itself; but you will be hard put indeed to surpass "Devil-Wings over Shadizar."

Dennis Dawson, 002 Johnston, GRC Indiana University Bloomington, Ind. 47401

Just a hurried note: If fan-mail is any indication of the reception given a particular issue of a comic-mag by Marveldom En Masse, then CONAN THE BARBARIAN #6 was by far the most popular tale to date. In fact, 'twould seem that the only really controversial aspect of the issue was the inclusion of a couple of characters called Fafnir and Blackrat. Some fantasy-lovers applauded their inclusion; a few loathed it, thinking that Roy and Barry meant to insult the fine sword-and-sorcery creations of author Fritz Leiber—than which few things could be further from the truth. 'Nuff said—we hope.

And now, a few notes on KULL THE CONQUEROR #1:

I've been following your CONAN THE BARBARIAN with interest and a little disappointment, but the indications are there will be no disappointment in KULL. Andru and Wood achieve the proper feeling of barbarism and savagery for Kull and catch Howard's character quite skillfully . . . No reflection on Barry Smith's talents as an artist, but he simply hasn't caught Conan, who looks more like Joe Namath than any character Howard ever created.

Gerald W. Page, editor <u>Witchcraft and Sorcery Magazine</u> (formerly <u>Coven 13</u>) P.O. Box 1331, Atlanta, Ga. 30301

KULL THE CONQUEROR #I was marvelous! The artwork was great! Ross Andru (the same one who works at DC Comics?) and Wally Wood did a great job, except on one point. Brule the Spear-Slayer is depicted as being as white and pale as the Atlanteans and Valusians, though the copy follows Howard in describing him as a dark-skinned savage. From references in "The Shadow Kingdom," he is probably colored much like an American Indian, only more brown than red.

wyde Clark, 19657 Sierra Madre Ave. Glendora, Calif.

KULL #1 is the most magnificent evocation of an exotic fantasy world I have ever seen in a comics magazine! I'd subscribebut how can you make a second issue as good as the first?

George Wagner, P.P. Box 3 Ft. Thomas, Ky. 41075



Incredible! That's the only way I can express my feelings regarding your new KULL THE CONQUEROR magazine. It was perfect in every possible way. Roy did a very skillful job of adapting REHoward's story; and where he did deviate, it seemed right for the "comic" adaptation. As for art, I haven't been so impressed with a comic-book since Frank Frazetta's THUN'DA #1 of twenty years ago!

Robert Barrett, 254 N. Estelle Wichita, Kansas 67214

Though I wouldn't have said this before reading KULL #1, I think this mag may turn out to be better than CONAN—and in my opinion CONAN is the finest comic you have for both art and stories. But why must every character in Marvel Comics have blue eyes? [Note: They're gray now, as REH intended.—Roy.]

Ken St. Andre, P.O. Box 1397 Cottonwood, Ariz. 86326

Ah . . . the power of Kull! It radiates from the pages with a fervor! The artwork teamup of Wood and Andru is fantastic. Wally always polishes anyone's pencils, and in this case, the result is remarkably similar to the great Hal Foster . . . And what I had already read in paperback form by Howard was conveyed with much more power in comics form with adept adaptation by Roy Thomas, who's come a tremendously long way from his first professional story in Charlton's SON OF VULCAN way back when. (Your Conan story in SAVAGE TALES §1, by the way, would have been the greatest, if it hadn't been almost a direct swipe, panel for panel, from a fanzine called STAR-STUDDED COMICS, where the story appeared in 1968. I wouldn't complain if it wasn't such an obvious copy, Some panels were even similar in their wording.)

Mark Ammerman, Seelyville Route Honesdale, Pa. 18431

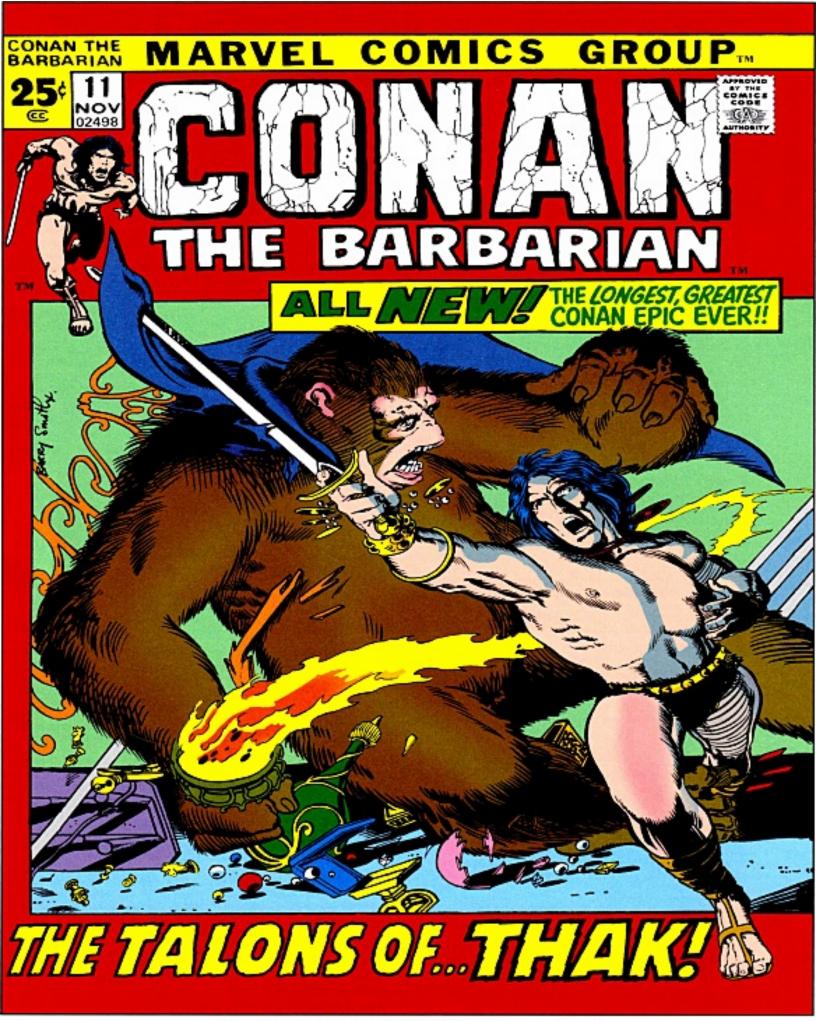
Just one comment, not even on Kull himself:

Much as we hate to blow the whistle on a fan who's written so rhapsodic a letter on KING KULL. Roy Thomas must beg to inform letter-writer Mark Ammerman (see above) that the adaptation of "The Frost Giant's Daughter" in SAVAGE TALES #1 was not in any way influenced by the fanzine adaptation which preceded it. Proof? For one thing, after merely a transatlantic (though lengthy) phone conversation on the subject with Roy, artist Barry Smith broke the story down into panels before it was scripted—and Barry had never even heard of the (admittedly fine) fanzine you mention. As for the coincidences in wording, they are obviously due to the fact that both writers were working, after all, from virtually the same material—and it would've been astonishing if there weren't many similarities. The defense rests. (Though, truth to tell, Mark was the only one who was attacking—and we're certain he's thought better of his words since first he penned them.)

And now, a parting shot: If there were any truly unfavorable letters received by us on KULL #1, we missed seeing them—hence the omission of any real pans among the pacans of preise on that classic first issue. And, while we think Marie and John Severin have done just as breathtaking a job on the Kull strip in their own decidedly different way, we're glad that both Wally Wood (see MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #1, still on sale) and Ross Andru (who doesn't work for our Deprived Competitor—not any more) are back with the Bullpen.

Coming up soon—Kull vs. the sorcerer called Thuisa Doom!

Be here, halcyon one!





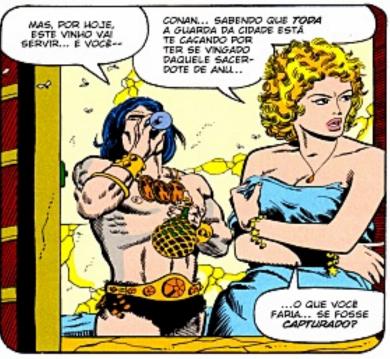
História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 11 (novembro/1971)



















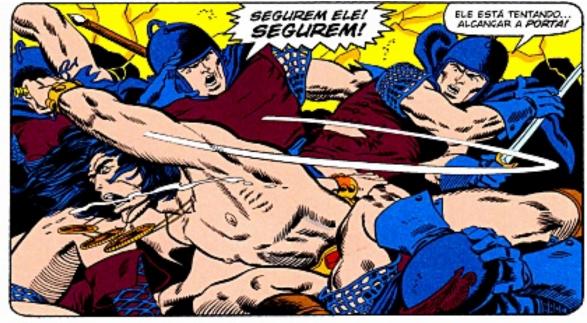










































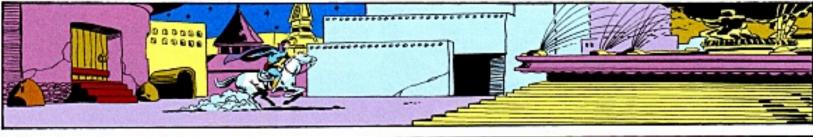






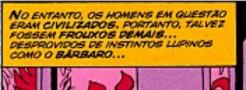












QUE FOI 1550?
QUEM VEM LA?

GE FOREM LACAIDS DO SACERDOTE VERMELHO, SAIBAM QUE MURILO NÃO SERÁ LUMA PRESA NADA FÂCILI





















































































































































































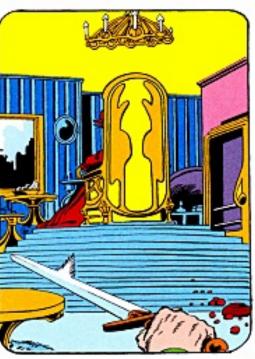
























































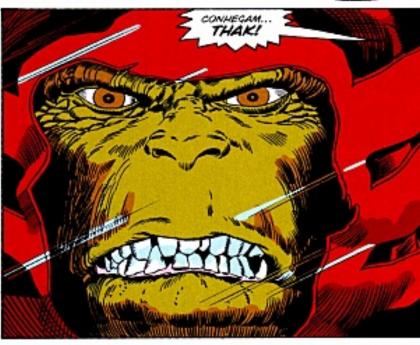
















































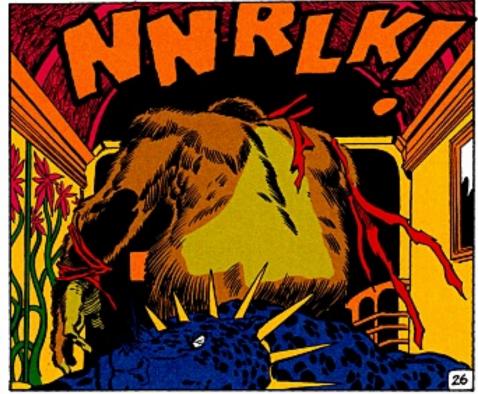
























































POR MAIS VELOZES QUE SEJAM AS PERNAS DE MURILO, O HORROR RECOBERTO DE PELOS ESTÁ QUASE EM SEU ENCALÇO E, AO TRANSPOR A CORTINA QUE DIVIDE O CORREDOR...





EM MEIO AOS CHOQUES DE MEMBROS EM PRENETICA DISPUTA DE ESPAÇO... TEM INICIO A BATALHA DO HOMEM CONTRA O MONSTROI

29









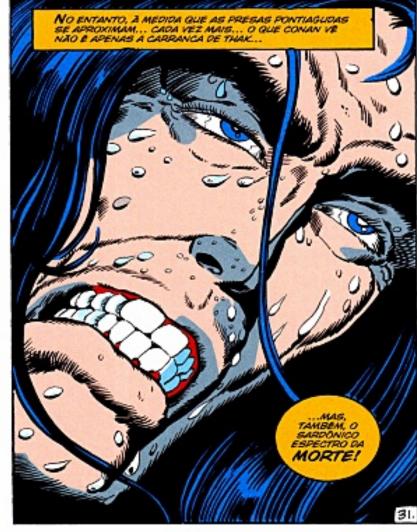
























































COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 1002

Gentlemen:

CONAN #7 is your best yet! The art has reached a new climax. The sequence of drawings illustrating Conan's entrance into the house of Kallian (to steal the contents of the bowl) is powerful. and well shows the value of a wordless series of frames. The tension created by the slow exposure of the man-serpent builds to the point of explosion, and the four-page battle that ensues is

gripping, to say the least.

I find that, of all the fine comic-books that you publish, CONAN THE BARBARIAN is my personal favorite. His fantastic adventures all take place in an environment that is decidedly alien to us (and to him). But, somehow the environment, although it is alien, is familiar to me. It summons forth out of the dark abyss of our infinite memory, a feeling of ancestry and times before history began. Although 1 consider the comics medium poor, and inadequate for "serious" literary attempts, I find that CONAN #7 is comparable if not better than a part of Hermann Hesse's Magister Ludi (a book that has already won its place in the annals of literary history) entitled "The Rainmaker". "The Rainmaker", although the setting is more primitive and does not have any swordplay, has the same sublime element—men in awe of nature and in fear of magic. In CONAN, magic is predominant and man's fears rule. If you can maintain this primitive atmosphere and your stories stay as fresh and as exciting as "The Lurker Within", I will remain loyal to your magazine.

Sincerely. Mark Bueide 3 Acorn Lane Westport, Conn. 06880

Then that's incentive enough for Roy and Barry (with a little help from their pal Sal Buscema) to keep trying and striving, Mr. B. The only point of yours we'd have to take issue with is when you say that you consider the comics medium a poor one. To those of us in the Bullpen, and to millions of people the world over, the comic-book and comic-strip comprise together (in different aspects) an art-form as legitimate as any other. The fact that they do not always realize their full potential, due to a myriad of reasons, far from negates their potential. Personally, Mark, we'd suggest that (while we don't want you to give up Hermann Hesse) you keep watching our efforts-our competitors' efforts-the Sunday and daily newspapers of the nation—and the new rash of underground comics as well. Out of one of these, mayhap out of all of these, may one day come accomplishments which will move and shake a world. We have spoken!

Sirs:

I can remain silent no longer.CONAN is the greatest thing to hit the comic rocks in a long, long time. Conan is awe-inspiring; even now I find myself speechless. Really, I mean this sincerely.

Unlike a great many of your readers, previous to his appearance in Marvel magazines, I had only heard of Conan, but had not read any of his manifold exploits. I liked the series from the start, but after the sixth issue I decided to try one of the many paperback volumes and see if it would be to my liking. Well, needless to say perhaps, I was totally entranced with Robert E. Howard's prose. It was some of the most enjoyable reading ever encountered in my many visits to the realm of fantasy. So, having seen Conan in his original form, my

anticipation for CONAN #7 was at its zenith.

I was not disappointed! Perhaps the best issue yet (though heavy consideration should be given to your adaptation of "The Tower of the Elephant"), "The Lurker Within" had everything. The cover was excellent, but the interior art was even better. Dan Adkins'inking improved greatly from his job on the first issue. Sal Buscema likewise did a very nice job. As long as one or the other inks CONAN, I'll be happy. Concerning Barry Smith, well, he is Conan! Don't you ever try and replace him with anybody else. Even if Frank Frazetta should offer his services for Conan, say no—Smith it is, and Smith it will ever be. Needless to say, Barry's art this issue was splendid. Especially fine was his rendering of Conan in the first panel on page three.

And if Barry Smith is the artist for Conan, then Roy Thomas is the writer for Conan. Roy's development of Conan's personality in this issue is more in accordance with Howard's original character than in earlier issues. Here we saw a grim barbarian who hires out as an outlaw and who possesses his own set of moral ethics, an ethic which allows for killing whenever it seems morally justified. Bravo, Stan and Roy! Conan is not a goodygoody type character, and I'm glad you saw fit to leave him as the grim anti-hero that he truly is. As to your use of Thoth-Amon in "The Lurker Within", I applaud it. Here is a character of almost unlimited possibilities, but please, use him strategically. Your best bet would be to keep his roles secondary, as you did in this issue, until enough tension is built up to assure that the first direct confrontation of Conan and Thoth-Amon will be a comic-magazine classic. Also, have you considered using continued stories in Conan? Well, if you have, please forget it! I don't know why, but I just know that the type of stories that you're doing now wouldn't lend themselves to the continued story formula. However, this isn't to say that there should be no continuity between issues, as there should. I just can't see how you could effectively break a story like "The Lurker Within" into two segments. It just wouldn't work. The lack of Conan's helmet did work, however. I thought I would miss it (as I did in "Devil-Wings over Shadizar") but I completely forgot it until I sat down to write this letter to you all.

I am awaiting the appearance of the Picts. It ought to make very interesting reading. Also, let us see more of the inhabitants of Stygia. Perhaps we might even have an escapade in the Western Sea soon, no?

Fred Hembeck

65 Frank Avenueh Yaphank, N.Y. 11980

We don't know where you've been all this time, Fred, but welcome aboard the Barbarian Bandwagon-and we're not slowing down to let you off till we get to the throne of Aquilonia!

Dear Roy and Barry.

I was amazed enough when you produced an adaptation as good as the original ("Tower of the Elephant"), but when you went and improved on Howard, well, you could have knocked me over with a cement block. Such was the case with "The Lurker Within,"

Of course, the original story ("The God in the Bowl") was a drag . . . the worst Howard I've ever read. You made some very good and necessary changes (curtailing the use of flashbacks, which were the original story's downfall; lengthening the battle between Conan and the Man-Snake; and the neat little touch on page 8 where the Barbarian mistook the stuffed elephant for Yagkosha).

But, I can't overlook the miraculous metamorphosis of Aztrias from man into woman, which deprived us blood-andgore afficiondos of a very good slaying . . But, I know, the code wouldn't approve. And how could they? It wouldn't do well at all to have a comic book hero going around committing senseless murders, now would it? But, I was wondering how

you'd pull it off.

I was glad last issue when Sal Buscema returned as Conan's inker (Giacoia is good, but on Smith-yecch), and I am equally glad to see Dan Adkins finishing Smith.

Speaking of Smith, aside from Adams and Morrow, he's the best artist you've got. Don't let him get away.

Tom Pever c/o Kogito Magazine Box 196 University Sta. Syracuse, N.Y. 13210

We don't intend to let any of the three gentlemen you named get away if we can help it, Tom, as you must know if you've browsed thru this month's issues of THE AVENGERS and MY LOVE. (And, lest you think that we intend to keep the multitalented Mr. Morrow on romance stories only, just wait'll you take a peek at his fantastic Falcon tale in the forthcoming issue of CAPTAIN AMERICA!)

Oh yes . . . and thanks for the comments on a certain comic-mag called CONAN THE BARBARIAN, too. You're our kind

of people!

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry.

This letter is mainly to Roy, but I want to congratulate you all on another fine issue of CONAN.

I think, Roy, that you did a fantastic job on "The Lurker Within", but I can't say that I liked the way you changed the story elements from the original story "The God in the Bowl". Unlike the job you did on "The Tower of the Elephant" and "The Frost Giant's Daughter", the story in #7 scared me a little, I fear that you just might get on the wrong track, like Gold Key did with their Edgar Rice Burroughs "Tarzan" adaptations. Many times a writer will change the story elements too much until the basic plot and spirit is lost amid these changes. Please don't let that happen to Conan.

Next and most important, slow down. Do you realize that you've aged Conan 2 years already? Sure, I know that at the present rate of aging Conan would last in his own comic for at least 10 years. But aging him 2 years in 7 issues is too much. You don't believe me? Watch and I'll prove it. In #1 you said he hadn't seen "twenty winters" yet. He hadn't even seen 17 winters yet! Remember, he was only 17 when he was captured by the Hyperboreans. Now according to the chronological order of the saga of Conan, the next adaptation will be "Rogues in the House". In the biographical paragraph before that story it says "He was nineteen at the time . . .". I say that you can't use the old "Marvel time system" excuse, because these stories are all in a chronological pattern. I hope that you find time to answer that question.

I would also like to know what happened to "Hall of the Dead". You said in an issue of <u>Marvelania</u> magazine that you would re-write the parts that <u>deCamp</u> or Carter added on to the unfinished stories. You've already taken it out of order. Will it appear later in CONAN or SAVAGE TALES?

Despite my complaints. I realize that it is quite a job to take on writing about an already-established character, and trying to please the ones who have read the original stories. I understand and will continue to buy my 12 copies a year until that glorious day that King Conan sails off into the unknown west.

Rick Bilzeu

P.S. I mis-quoted and would like to correct the line about his age. It should have read: "He is about 19 at the time of . . .". Can't win them all.

Hmmm. That's just what oil Stan was telling Roy and Barry a few minutes ago when they first read your letter, Rick. Still, we're betting that—if you hadn't read "The God in the Bowl" before you read Marvel's adaptation of same—you'd have dug it as much as you seem to have enjoyed "Tower of the Elephant." What say you? Are we right or wrong?

Anyway, after giving due consideration to your thoughtful letter, Roy and Barry still feel they'll probably continue to age Conan a bit spasmodically. After all, they'd like to skip over some of the less interesting (to them) parts of the Cimmerian's life to get to some of the juicier segments (like, for instance, Conan's stint as righthand man of Belit, the she-piratel). So, we

hope you'll just fill in the time-gaps mentally and continue to groove on what our strong-willed writer and artist dish out—and we're dead certain you know that they care as much about REH's colorful character as even you do!

Incidentally, as you know by now, it was CONAN #8 which saw the Marvel adaptation of the Howard synopsis which L. Sprague deCamp turned into a somewhat different tale—but each of the two versions is, in our mind, equally legitimate, since REH didn't indicate precisely whether it preceded or followed any particular Conan tale. And what did you think of that little comic-mag spellbinder, friend?

THE FILES

Dear Marvel Reader.

Our Bullpen Bulletins page, elsewhere in this issue, exults over the fact that, beginning this month, our comics magazines have risen in size and price—from 36 pages to 52 pages, and from 15¢ to 25¢. However, we thought we'd use this additional space to drop a personal line to each and every one of you faithful ones who have loyally supported Marvel over these past few frantic years, and to explain more fully just why the change was made.

At first, we intended to go into a long spiel about how everything you buy costs more in this inflation-ridden world of ours—about the rise in the price of movies, magazines, almost all modes and media of entertainment. And we figured we'd probably talk a bit about ever-spiraling printing costs, about increased payments to the writers and artists in this whacky business of ours—in short, about how the 15¢ comic book, after only a couple of years of life, is (to put it plainly) just no longer a feasible item.

But who are we kidding? If you own a radio or a TV set, or even if you just drop by the corner grocery, you already know most of that—and we give you credit for brain enough to guess the rest.

Besides, it just occurred to us that we're not simply raising the price of what you're getting—but we're giving you another full 15 pages of art and story, or virtually a second mag inside the same color-splashed covers, for that extra dime—and it doesn't take an Einstein (or even New Math) to figure that, with this price and size change, Marvel Comics are now a bigger bargain than ever! And we intend to keep 'em that way!

So why did we bother with this letter at all? Just consider it our way of welcoming you aboard—and assuring you that, whatever wonders have gone before, the best is yet to come!

Sincerely, Your Ever-lovin' Bullpen

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST Now on Sale

FANTASTIC FOUR #116: Impossible but true! The new leader of the F.F. is — Doctor Doom! Plus, the sinister Stranger — and the end of the Over-Mind! A shocker!

SPIDER-MAN #102: The vampire called Morbius is at large in the city! And, if that isn't enough for you, Spidey's sole ally is none other than—the Lizard!

THOR #193: Enter—the Silver Surfer! Begins—the most mind-wrenching battle in the annals of timeless Asgard! And wait'll you dig John Buscema's artwork!

AVENGERS #93: Our awesome assemblers battle the F.F.—or do they? Bonus: the return of the most unexpected Avenger of all! Tale by Thomas — art by Adams!

CAPT. AMERICA & THE FALCON #143: Burn, Harlem, Burn! And our star-spangled teammates are helpless to stop it — unless they can unmask the greatest villain of all! HULK #145: From a star beyond a star comes a power-mad Colossus! Ol' Greenskin fights as never before! But can even he hold out for long against — Godspawn?

IRON MAN #43: Take a super-villain who harnesses the energy of the very earth itself — mix in one armored Avenger — then stir! That's the recipe for — Action Plus!

SUB-MARINER #43: "Mindquake!" Namor – alone against Tuval, the Mind-Master! Plus, the startling re-appearance of two of Subby's most deadly foed!

DAREDEVIL #81: Make way for the Black Widow! But, whose side is she on, in the battle against the ominous Owl? Plus — the secret of Mr. Kline, at last!

AMAZING ADVENTURES #9: The Inhumans are reunited with Black Bolt just in time to come face to face with Magnetol Plus — the Yellow Claw, and a girl known only as — Venus!

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #11: The longest, greatest Conan epic ever! The battling barbarian — in the grip of Thak,

the Terrible One! The most unique series in comicdom today!

SGT. FURY #93: Battle action with a twist—as the hard-hitting Howlers try to prevent the bombing of an unsuspecting German village! Don't miss this one!

CREATURES ON THE LOOSE #14: A heaping handful of haloyon haunted goodies — served up at the stroke of midnight on the night of the full moon! More you could ask for?

AND, OF COURSE -

WHERE MONSTERS DWELL #12 — RAW-HIDE KID #93 — WESTERN GUNFIGHT-ERS #7 — RINGO KID #12 — KID COLT #156 — MY LOVE #14 — TWO-GUN KID #101—and king-size specials starring THE AVENGERS—HULK—DAREDEVIL— SUB-MARINER — CAPTAIN AMERICA and a certain CHAMBER OF DARKNESS!

AND, STILL ON SALE-

MARVEL FEATURE #1 — ASTONISHING TALES #8 — X-MEN #72 — and a whole passel of the greatest mags since Guttenberg got it all together!





CONAN, O BÁRBAROS

"SAIBA, Ó PRÍNCIPE, QUE ENTRE OS ANOS EM QUE OS OCÉANOS TRAGARAM A **ATLÂNTIDA** É AS CIDADES RESPLANDECENTES, É OS ANOS EM QUE SE LEVANTARAM OS **FILHOS DE ARVAS**, HOUVE UMA **ERA INIMAGINÁVEL**, NA QUAL REINOS ESPLENDOROSOS ESPALHARAM-SE PELO MUNDO COMO MIRÍADES DE ESTRELAS SOS O MANTO AZUL DOS CÊUS."

"PARA LÁ FOI **CONAN, O CIMÉRIO,** DE CABELOS NEGROS, OLHAR SOMBRIO E ESPADA NA MÃO, LADRÃO, SALTEADOR, MATADOR, DONO DE GIGANTESCA MELANCOLIA E DE GIGANTESCA ALEGRIA, PARA PISOTEAR OS **ADORNADOS** TRONOS DA TERRA SOB SEUS PÉS CALCADOS EM SANDÂLIAS." — R. E. H.

HABITANTE DAS TREVAS



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 12 (dezembro/1971)























































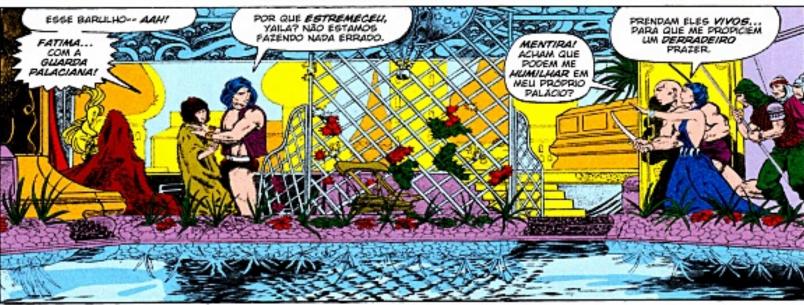
















































OUTRORA, ELE FOI UM HOMEM... UMA PESSOA COMO OUTRA QUALQUER. UM SER HUMANO QUE VIVIA FELIZ, SORRIA, AMAVA E GERAVA FILHOS. UM DIA, NO ENTANTO, ALGUM PECADO INIMAGINAVEL OFENDEU DEUSES CRUBIS, QUE LHE IMPUSERAM UM ATERRADOR CASTIGO: SUA PROPRIA HUMANIDADE SE ESVAIU...















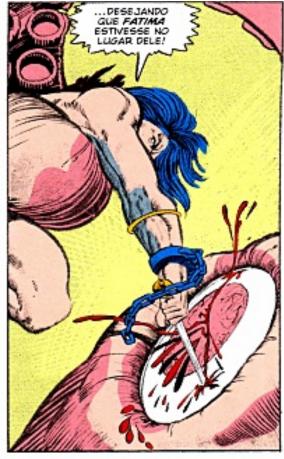




















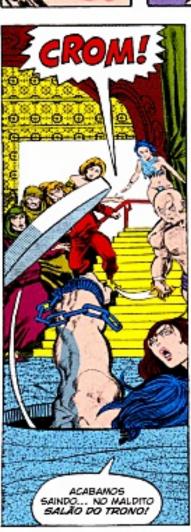
































































CONTOS DA ERA HIBORIANA! 'MAS O REINO MAIS ORGULHOSO ERA A AQUILONIA, REINANDO SUPREMA VALANNUS NO SONHADO OESTE ...' CAIU! - ROBERT E. HOWARD SABE, GIL, ADORO FAZER AQUELAS HISTÒRIAS DO CONAN... MAS DEVIA TER MAIS COISA ACONTECENDO NA ERA HIBORIANA DO HOWARD, HÁ 12.000 ANOS. O DIA PERTENCE KALLIGOR! QUE PENA QUE NINGUÉM ESCREVE MAS ALGUEM VAI E DESENHA ESSAS ESCREVER, ROY. NOS! AVENTURAS. WAGINE-SE EM UM DIA NUBLADO NA AQUILÓNIA... NA PROVÍNCIA DE POITAIN... DE POITAIN... OUVINDO OS SONS METÁLICOS DE UM TORNEIO DE CAVALEIROS...

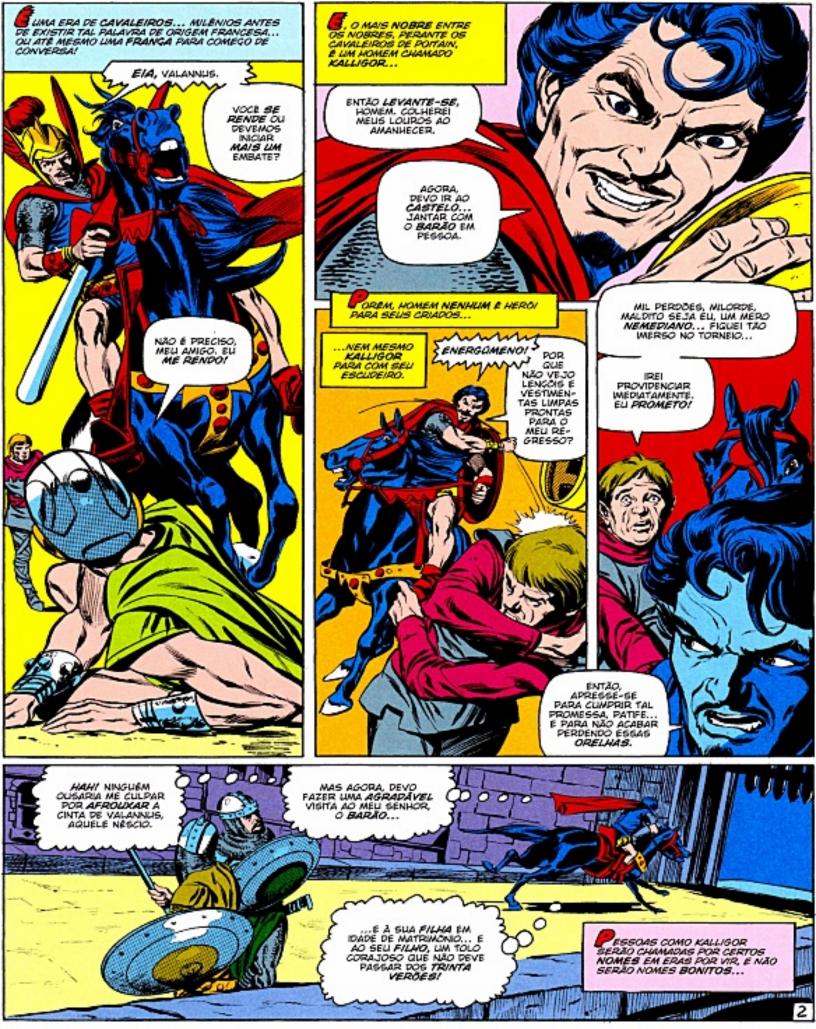
E ENTÃO, DESTACANDO-SE DO TUMULTO... UM ORITO ESTRIPENTE!



EDITOR ORIGINAL* ROY THOMAS

GIL KANE ILUSTRAÇÕES *

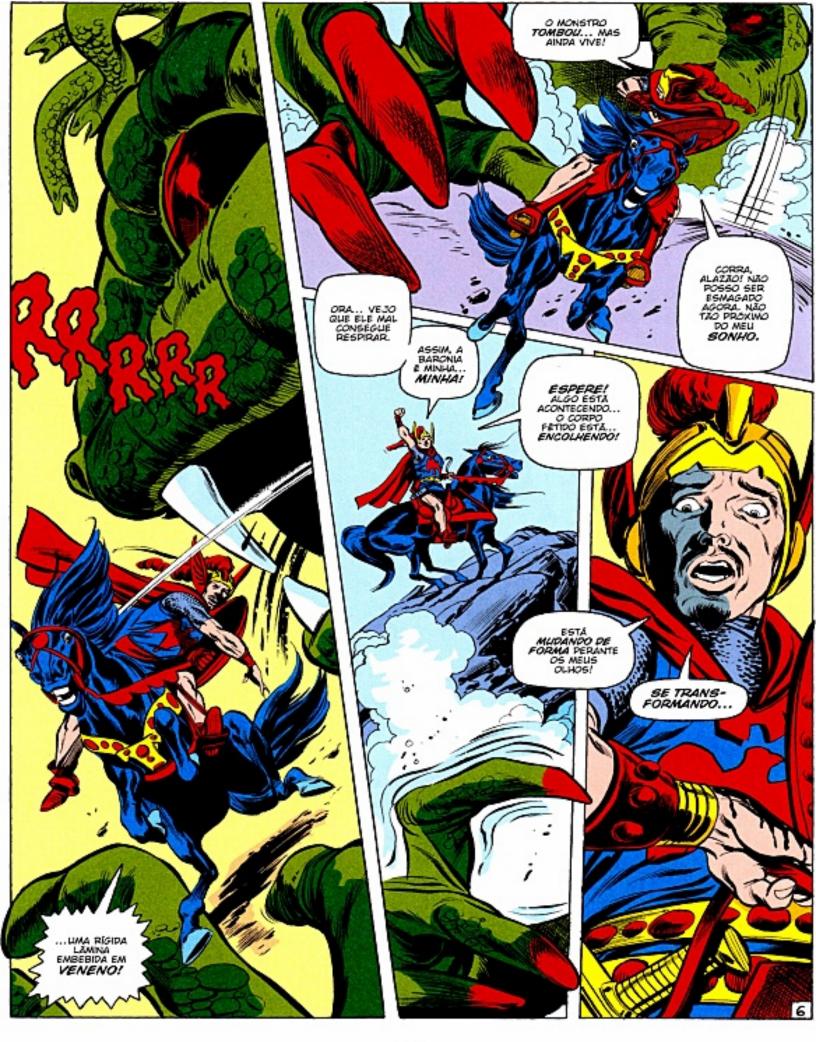
DIVERSOS ARTISTAS ARTE-FINAL



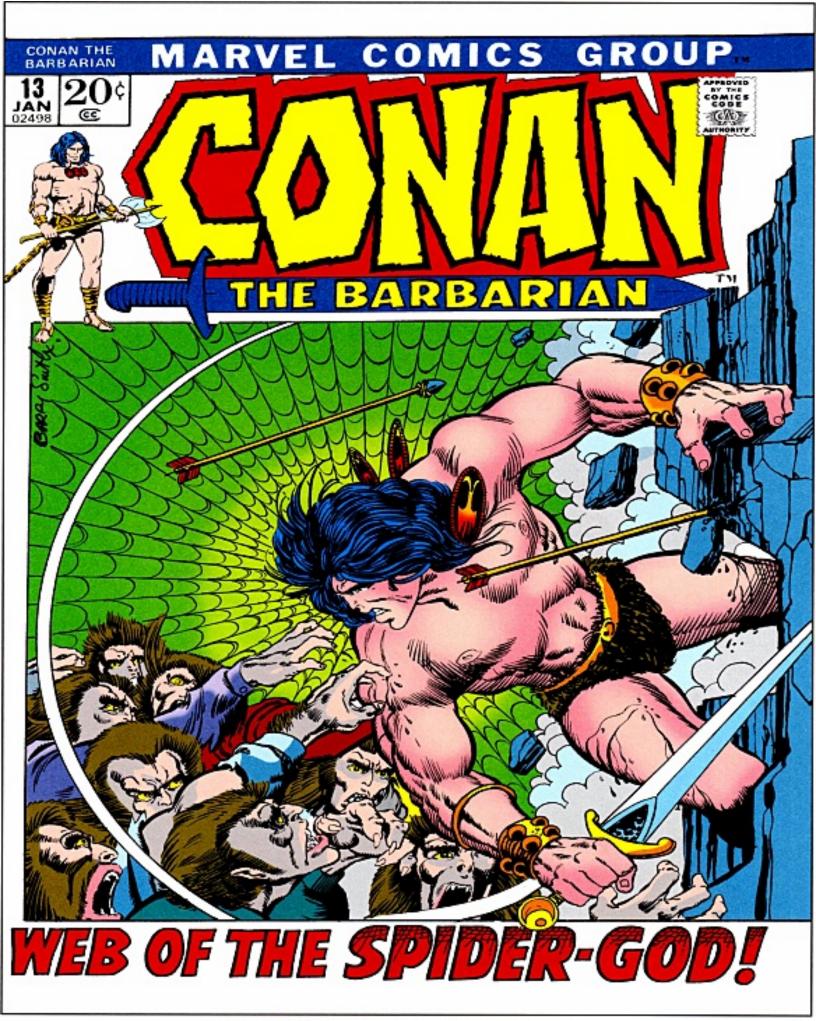














História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 13 (janeiro/1972)































































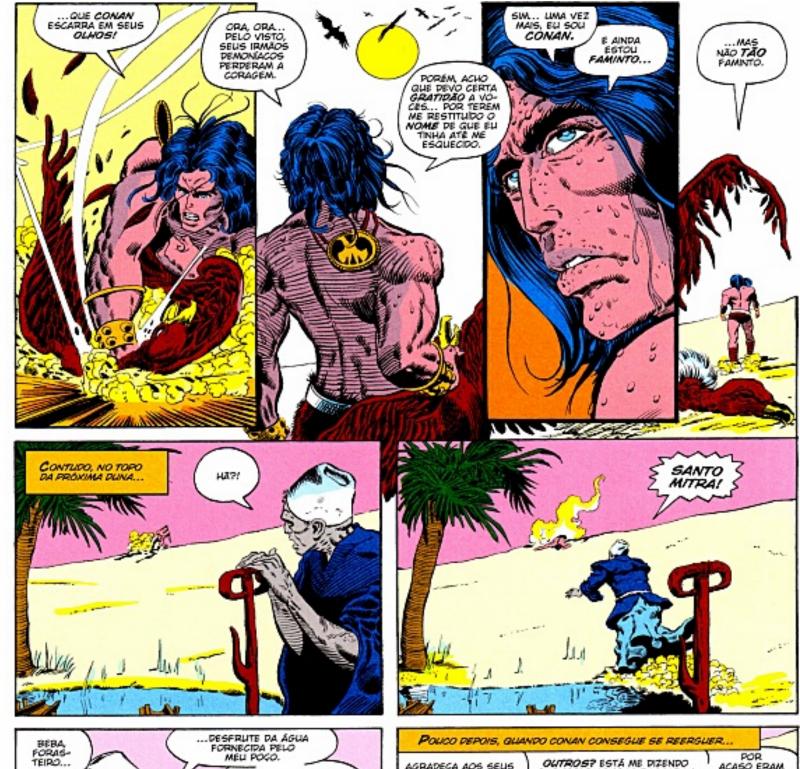


























































































































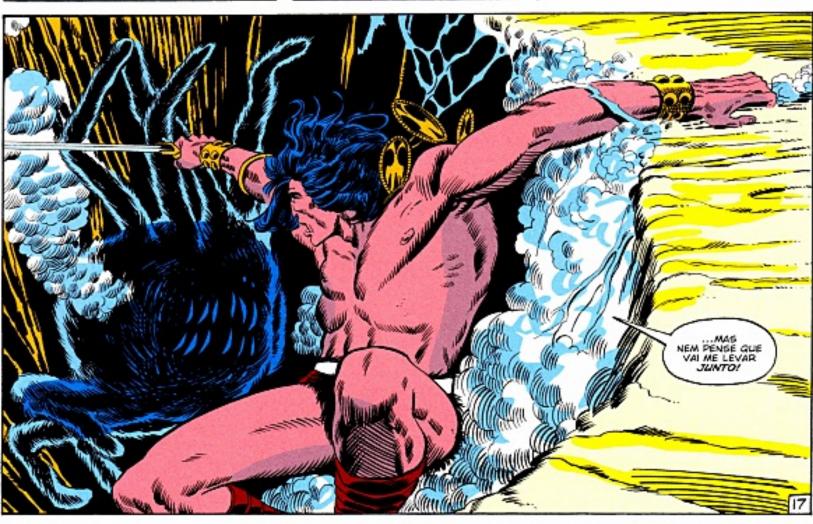












































































HE HYBORIAN

Okay, I just wanna say that after collecting and reading comics for over two years, I was just about ready to quit spending my hard-earned cash on 'em.

Then I went through CONAN #9 . . . Whew!!! By Crom, I don't exactly know how to express this, but oh, well, I'll just say that it was definitely a landmark comic mag for your company. The art was probably the best I've come across in a long time (not a single word on page 11 . . . Wow!). The cover was a very close summation of what was actually inside. (The lack of word baloons, as far as I'm concerned, enhanced the quality of the cover). And the plot could easily have come from ancient unrecorded history. (The black-winged entity's race must have been extremely sophisticated to predict its own grand finale by fire—on page 28, panel 4). Well, before my praise gets out of hand .

Let me end my letter by saying that I would appreciate it if you would keep from raising the price on your mags. I wouldn't stop buying Marvel Comics if the price did go up, but I wouldn't be able to get more than one copy of an issue.

Until Conan gets a job as a riveter on the SST, MAKE MINE

MARVEL!!!

Mike Morrison, 5104 Woodlawn N., Seattle, Wash, 98103

We will, Mike, even though we'll have to settle now for your just buying one copy of each ish. Sorry 'bout that, but it seems that old debbil Inflation is more powerful than Conan and Kull

put together.

It might be worth mentioning that the Robert E. Howard tale on which our ninth issue was based was "The Garden of Fear" (natch), which was last printed in an out-of-print hard-cover volume entitled The Dark Man and Others, a collection of some of REH's better non-Conan efforts. 'Twas an easy matter, however, to make the hero of that little classic into Conan, the heroine into Jenna-and the resulting captions were perhaps 50% Howard.

(Interesting sidenote: There wasn't a single word of dialogue in the original story—so the hardest part of the adapting was to find excuses for Conan and Jenna to speak. Personally, we'd have dug trying a whole issue without word balloons, but hardcore experience has shown that such comics almost always fall to sell-and, in the long run, an issue of CONAN which sold about 2% would benefit nobody, especially not the reader who wants to see the mag continued. This whole tirade, by the way, is by way of explaining things to those diehard few who write in each and every month to beg us to do a whole issue of CONAN without word balloons. 'Taint possible, people!)

Dear Group,

As a reader of comics since childhood, I have never found myself so thoroughly bedazzled by a series prior to CONAN. Here we find a multi-faceted character growing and learning in a strange but plausible world. The writers and artists of this series tend to complement and expand on Howard's art, making CONAN far more than mere entertainment. The continued appearances of Jenna are welcome, though she is not the mostinteresting of females thus far presented. The major fear in my mind is the continued overabundance of fabulous towers. treasures, and magic beasts. Hopefully they will all fit into the greater mythology, but there is a danger that the reader will grow weary with too much stress on magic. Conan is a very human figure; from time to time it might be refreshing to put his sword to use against purely human foes. These complaints are minor and relative. My thanks for bringing CONAN to the public.

May Your House Be Free from the Anger of Thoth-Amon,

W.D. Barry

And our thanks for your support, W.D.

Incidentally, there'll be no issue of CONAN THE BARBARIAN next month-but never fear, we're not discontinuing Marvel's most unique mag. Actually, we planned to make it bimonthly for a time, both because of slightly sagging sales plus wear and tear on artist Barry Smith-not to mention writer Roy Thomas as well. However, things have improved since then, so after a welldeserved one-month rest, Roy and Barry will be back at the helm (and so, hopefully, will inker Sal Buscema) with our first twoparter, in which the battling Cimmerian meets Elric, the fabulous sword-and-sorcery creation of English fantasy writer Michael Moorcock. Meanwhile, how'd the ranks of Conan rooters like the tale plotted by s-f writer John Jakes for this issue? Let us know, huh, 'cause he and Roy would kinda like to do another story together sometime.

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

Without a doubt, CONAN THE BARBARIAN is the best new comic, in my opinion, to hit the stands in the past five years. Why? A superb combination of imagery and realism, and, of course, the genius of Howard. The format of a comic-book does lack in its length, amount of words that can be used, etc., but you have made up for it in a unique way. I had read a fair amount of Howard, mostly Conan, and, while good, it did not seem real to me, or even cause any images of the Hyborian age to really form in my mind. But in the panels of Barry Smith's art, I see a vast world extending out beyond the reaches of the white borders. Images, no matter how fantastic, are either real to us or vague. The reality of the CONAN comic is the superb imagery, the way it makes my imagination work. This is the major fault with television programs—there is no thinking involved. The primitive, and yet astonishingly realistic drawings of Barry Smith spark the human imagination with the smell of blood, the taste of dust, the sounds and sights of Howard's great creation. This is why the fantasy is realistic—not because what happens is logical and worldly, but because it makes you use your imagination. I have seldom experienced this in any form of literature or communication, but it is waiting for those who stare deep into each panel, read the words, close their eyes—and are suddenly THERE.

I first noticed this in issue #6, a good issue, though not the best story. The interpretation made up for any vagueness or lack of imagination in the plot. Another comment for Frazetta freaks: Frazetta has the advantage of an easel and a set of oils, which he uses beautifully, but I doubt that with pencil in hand he would give the same feeling to Conan. Frazetta is good-make no mistake—but aside from bad coloring and inking, Smith's art has been excellent so far for the comic form. In issue #7, the inking improved, but the coloring was still out of place. I suggest you keep Smith and Adkins on the mag for a long time; soon they will have perfected Conan and assured Frazetta disciples all over that this IS Conan. If the mag continues developing as it has, you may just have the best comic-book ever produced. I'm reading more Howard now, and seeing some great adventures ahead if you follow the biography. Thank you for your

imagination and hard work.

Crom. C.B. Davis, 9459 Buffalo Ave.

Orangeville, Calif. 95662 And we will be following the same sketchy biography which

various fans have worved out for Conan's chronology, C.B. Only thing is, Roy and Barry will be doing it in their own offbeat way. Most CONAN readers seem to dig the inking of both Dan

Adkins and Sal Buscema equally, by the way, so we'll probably keep the latter artist on the mag for the present. However, the titanic team of Thomas, Kane, and Adkins-which co-created some of the most memorable issues of the late CAPTAIN MARVEL title—have joined forces on a brand-new feature in the pages of MARVEL PREMIERE #1, on sale any day now. (We don't wanna tell you its name or subject just yet, but we think it's destined to be one of Marvel's most memorable series of all! A word to the wise, pilgrim.)

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

(Real Frantic One)-A buyer of at least 3 Marvel R.F.O. mags a month.

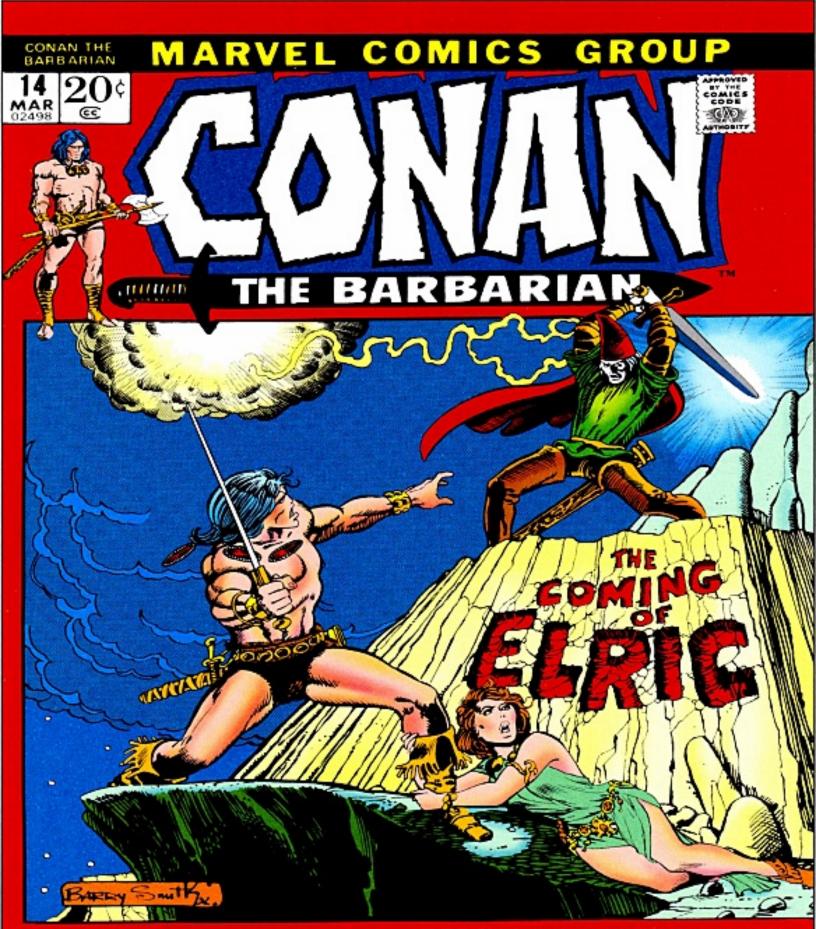
(Titanic True Believer) — A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner. T.T.B.

(Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed. O.N.S.

(Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks. K.O.F.

(Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone pos-sessing all four of the other titles. P.M.M.

(Fearless Front-Facer) — An honorary title be-stowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty, F.F.F.



A SWORD CALLED ... STORMBRINGER!



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 14 (março/1972)





















































































































































































































% MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 1002

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

It is indeed amazing how Roy and Barry can keep topping themselves with each succeeding issue of CONAN THE BARBAR-IAN. Number 10 was a masterpiece, if only for the new 25¢ size. The story and art didn't hurt, either!

Roy did an excellent job of elaborating on the hints Howard left at the beginning of his "Rogues in the House," and setting the stage for the adaptation of the main story in the next issue. I hope he did as well with it as he did number 10.

And of course, let's not forget the fabulous artwork by the team of Smith and Buscema. They go together beautifully on this strip, although I'd like to see Tom Palmer ink an entire issue.

But now, the main reason for this letter. King Kull is too good to keep hidden in the back of Conan's book. For some reason, perhaps for the same reason I liked the Sub-Mariner before he became a surface-dweller, I like Kull better than Conan. The close friendship between Kull and Brule the Spear-Slaver simply cannot be brought out in a few pages every other month of so. In other words, give Kull back his own magazine, in king-size form, of course.

> Hoy R. Murphy, Jr. Kayford. West Virginia 25116

Afraid that's a bit out of the question just now, Hoy, since Marvel dropped its entire 25¢ line for the nonce to concentrate on nothing but 20¢ titles. However, this might just be the place to mention that King Kull (or Kull the Conqueror, take your pick) is scheduled to begin a new round of deathless sagas in the forthcoming issue of MONSTERS ON THE PROWL. (And what better place for a hero who started his comic-mag life in the pages of its sister-mag, CREATURES ON THE LOOSE-which itself this month debuts a startling new series entitled "Warrior of Mars"?)

Meanwhile, for those improvident few who haven't traced down the Robert E. Howard source of CONAN #10, 'tis a priceless paragraph in his tale "Rogues in the House," which in turn became the basis of #11. Here's that paragraph, in all its pristine

glory:
"There was a priest of Anu whose temple, rising at the fringe of the slum district, was the scene of more than devotions. The priest was fat and full-fed, and he was at once a fence for stolen articles and a spy for the police. He worked a thriving trade both ways, because the district on which he bordered was the Maze, a tangle of muddy, winding alleys and sordid dens, frequented by the boldest thieves in the kingdom. Daring above all were a Gunderman deserter from the mercenaries and a barbaric Cimmerian. Because of the priest of Anu, the Gunderman was taken and hanged in the market square. But the Cimmerian fled, and learning in devious ways of the priest's treachery, he entered the temple of Anu by night and cut off the priest's head. There followed a great turmoil in the city, but search for the killer proved fruitless until a woman betrayed him to the authorities and led a captain of the guard and his squad to the hidden chamber where the barbarian lay drunk."

What Roy and Barry did, of course, was to make that Gunderman into Burgun (from issue #8) and the betraying femme into none other than Jenna . . . who got her comeuppance the next issue. Since none of these characters was named by REH, 'twas simplicity itself. Crom, aren't there any secrets Roy and Barry

can keep from curious Conanophiles?

Dear Stan, Roy, Barry, Sal, Sam, Irving, etc., etc.

I have just finished reading CONAN THE BARBARIAN #10, and although it's kind of late in the game to congratulate you on

such a fine publication, I think I will anyway. Y'see, I just wanted to make sure that every issue would live up to the promise of grandeur hinted at in the first issue.

Well, I needn't have bothered. Didn't it comprise the talents of some of the immortals of comicdom and, most important of all. didn't it have the name "Marvel Comics Group" in the upper left-hand corner? Indeed, the same group that monthly brings us such classics as the FANTASTIC FOUR, SPIDER-MAN, and so on?

Like I said, I needn't have worried, because CONAN is indeed great and soaring to heights of glory that such now-defunct masterpieces as DR. STRANGE and SILVER SURFER might have envied! It is the comic-book of today—and of the future.

Beth Bardossi, 27 Tapper Drive Hunt Station, N.Y. 11746

What can we say to that, Beth, except that Roy and Barry'll keep trying harder than ever to keep CONAN what it has always been-the most unique comic-mag on today's market. 'Nuff said!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Although It was last issue's letters page that dealt with the mountain of missives on CONAN #9, we neglected to mention that that issue's epic-"The Garden of Fear"-was copyright 1945 by William C. Crawford, publisher of the fantasy magazine Witchcraft and Sorcery, whom we belatedly thank for his kind permission to adapt the story into a Conan saga. Incidentally, though we announced last ish that "The Garden of Fear" was currently out of print, 'twould seem that we were wrong—for readers can obtain a booklet which contains that timeless tale, and several other weirdling wonders, by sending the meagre sum of 35¢ to Fantasy Publishing Co., 1855 W. Main St., Alhambra, Calif. 91801. Try it; it's well worth two bits and a dime. And while you're at it, you might ask about a sub to W&S (formerly titled Coven 13) as well; it's the modern-day successor to the Weird Tales pulps which introduced Conan to a breathless world, and who knows but what the canny Mr. Crawford has something just as big up his sleeve? Tell 'em Marvel sent you . .

P.S.: Due to Barry Smith's recent British vacation and various other factors, we've had to delay restoring CONAN to monthly publication for another issue or two-but hang in there, friend.

The best is yet to come!



KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

(Real Frantic One)-A buyer of at least 3 Marvel R.F.O.

(Titanic True Believer) - A divinely-inspired T.T.B. No-Prize' winner.

(Quite 'Nuff Sayer) — A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed. O.N.S.

K.O.F.

F.F.F.

(Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.

(Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone pos-P.M.M. sessing all four of the other titles.

(Fearless Front-Facer) - An honorary title be-stowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond

REPRODUÇÃO DA SEÇÃO DE CARTAS PUBLICADA EM CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 14.





CONAN AND ELRIC BATTLE SIDE BY SIDE AGAINST
THE HELL-HORDES OF CHAOS!



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 15 (maio/1972)



















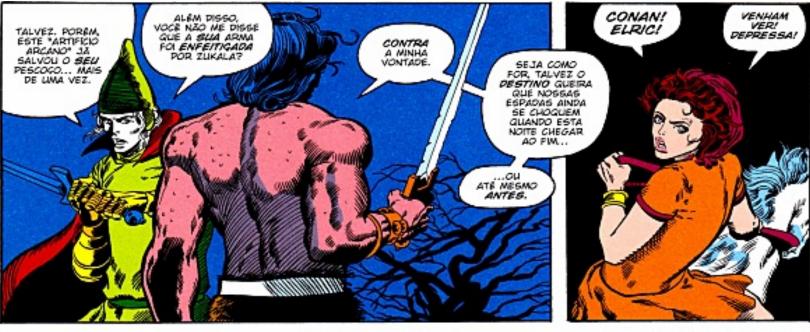






























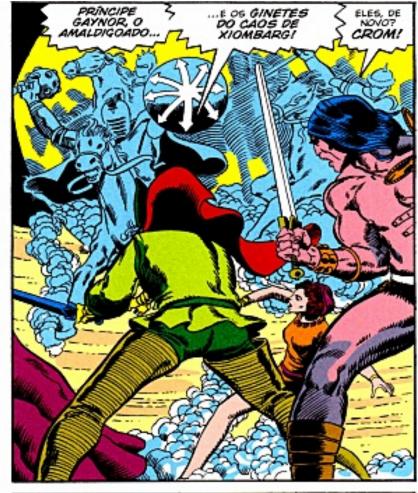


































































O TEMPO PARECE ESTANCAR... E AS PALAVRAS DO SENHOR DA LEI ECOAM EM PARAGENS MUITO DISTANTES...













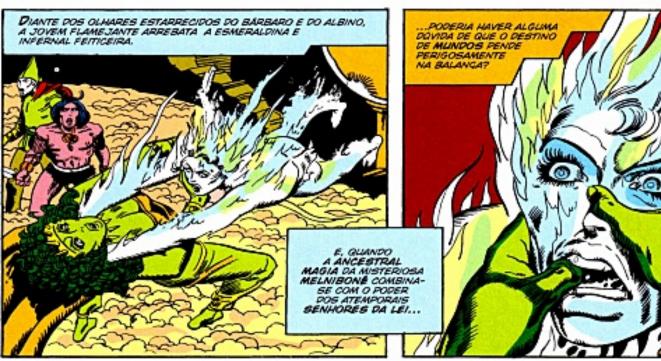








14.

















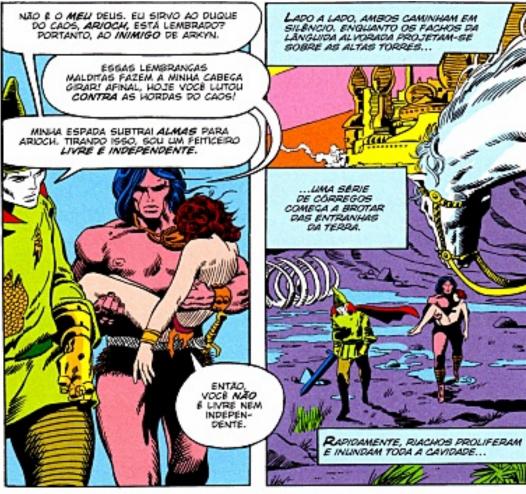




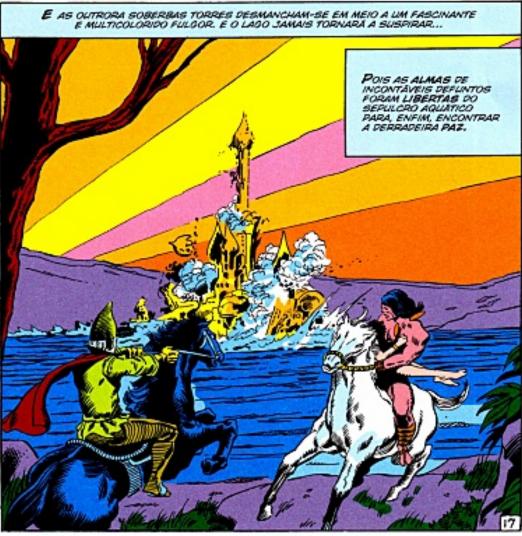


















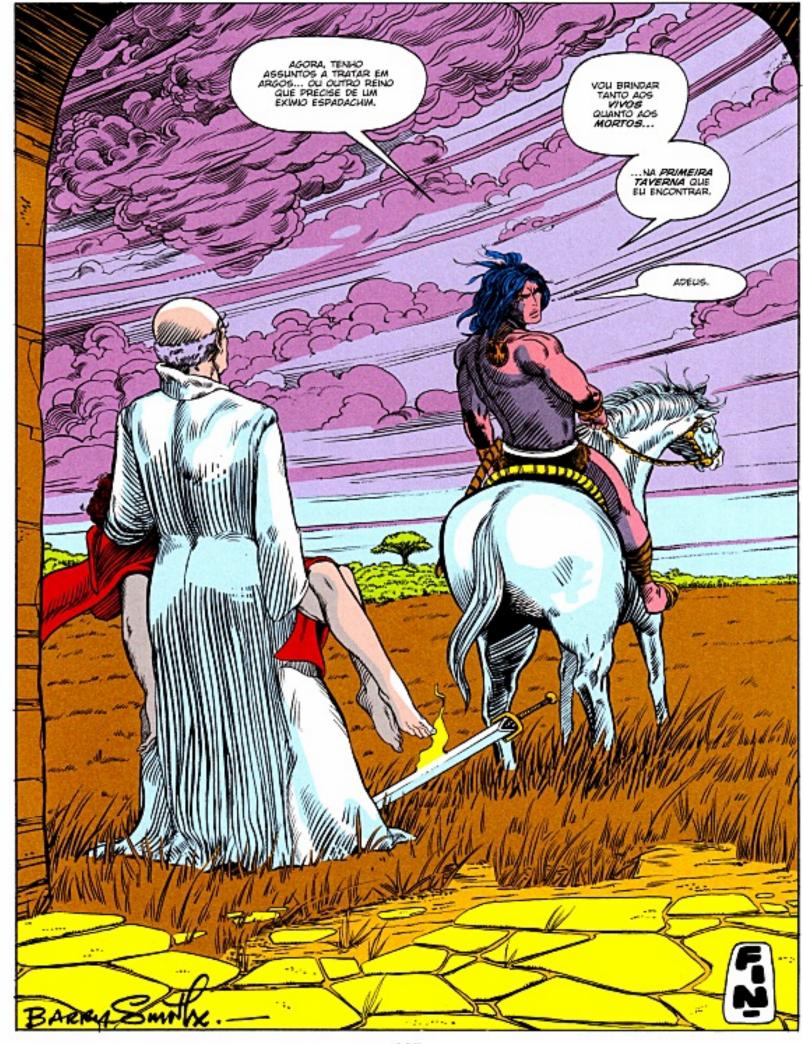












THE HYBORIAN PAGE

A MIXED BAG OF MIND-BOGGLING MISSIVES: This issue marks Barry Smith's final appearance as regular artist of CONAN THE BARBARIAN—at least for the time being.

No, no—put away those bombs and brickbats, friends and neighbors—'tis no vile plot of Marvel Comics, playing games of musical chairs with the artist of one of comicdom's most unique strips, but rather the decision and request of Barry himself! For personal reasons, our Shazam-winning young Britisher feels that he would like to move on to other features—and so Stan and Roy (and the rest of Marveldom, we trust) can only concur and wish Barry the best of luck on THE AVENGERS and other mini-epics he'll be producing in the near and far future. The lad wanted to go out with a bang, however—hence he finished this Michael-Moorcock-plotted two-parter, a comic-book event in and of itself, before bidding the mag a regretful adieu.

Starting next issue, gregarious Gil Kane will be teaming up with Roy Thomas (and a special surprise inker whose work we think you'll dig) to continue the reign of the first and only

successful sword-and-sorcery comic-mag of all time!

By a weird coincidence, this seems like the best of times (if such there be at all) for changing artists on the strip, since we'll soon be chronicling the adventures of Conan as he leaves the barbarian-thief phase of his life and becomes (as his creator Robert E. Howard originally intended) a mercenary soldier and landless wanderer, in a series of tales adapted from the pen of the great REH himself.

And, one final burst of good news: that forthcoming issue is scheduled to herald CONAN's return to regular monthly publication. So stick around, swordsman—once-a-month

wonderment is on the way again!

Dear Marvel Bunch,

I would feel terribly remiss if I didn't write in to congratulate Roy, Barry, and Sal on CONAN #11. I derived a great deal of pleasure from the story and art of "Rogues in the House." Roy Thomas' adaptation was quite faithful to the original, and maintained Howard's same chilling mood—a difficult feat well done!

The quality of Barry Smith's art is what really set me off, though. His work has been steadily improving from the start, and I must say that I found this set of drawings particularly pleasing. Barry's picture concepts are terrific and the amount of rich detail (and Sal Buscema's embellishment thereof) are aweinspiring. Though I've never illustrated a full comic, I've done a few short comic tales, illustrated pulps, and worked on the Tarzan strip. I know what work went into CONAN #11!

Please accept my compliments on a superb piece of work.

William Stout, 2003 N. Beachwood Dr. #11 Hollywood, Calif. 90068

Compliments acknowledged, Bill—and we hope that one day soon we're acknowledging still another letter from you talking about an issue of CONAN which has surpassed even our epic eleventh issue, which has probably garnered as much overwhelmingly favorable mail as any mag which mighty Marvel ever published.

Conan's life being what it was (in the world of fiction, anyhow), it'll be a while before Roy and Gil are able to adapt any more actual Conan prose into comics form—but they have some other REH adaptations coming up which'll move and shake you, beginning with next issue's tale—"The Gods of Bal-

Sagoth!" See you then, right?



Dear Sirs:

Take it from a true sword-and-sorcery fan: CONAN THE BARBARIAN is a masterpiece! Like so many before me, I have found it impossible to remain silent about the marvelous job you've done with this magazine. I have been a fan of Robert E. Howard for time time, and I've longed to see his greatest creation in illustrated form. Now it has happened, thru the fantastic work of Marvel Comics. The artwork by Barry Smith in CONAN #11 is really something else! But I guess that goes for every CONAN mag published so far (and I haven't missed one).

Having read and re-read the REH novels, I expected (sorry, Stan, Roy, and Barry) the worst. Instead I found an overall job which I think anyone else would be hard-put even to equal, let alone surpass. No more lack of faith from this Marvelite!

Now that you have had so much success with Conan and Kull, have you thought about branching out into other Howardian characters? Things could really be done with Bran Mak Morn and Solomon Kane. Not to mention Esau Cairn (Almuric) and Breckinridge Elkins from Bear Creek. How about considering it, at least?

Bill Orlikow, 7 Glencoe Avenue Winnipeg 15, Man., Canada

We've gone a bit further than that, friend. Not only is Kull back in harness as the lead feature in MONSTERS ON THE PROWL (and don't be too surprised if he's got his own mag any day now!), but Roy is hard at work with genial Gene Colan on an adventure starring Solomon Kane, the Puritan swashbuckler who was one of REH's earliest creations. As for any of the other Howard heroes you mention above, lad—well, let's just wait and see, shall we? In the meantime, sneak a peek at the current issue of CREATURES ON THE LOOSE and its spanking new feature "Guillivar Jones, Warrior of Mars," and see if it'll keep you out of the pool hall till Breck Elkins and Bran Mak Morn come galloping along...

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel

T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) — A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner.

Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.

K.O.F.

(Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.

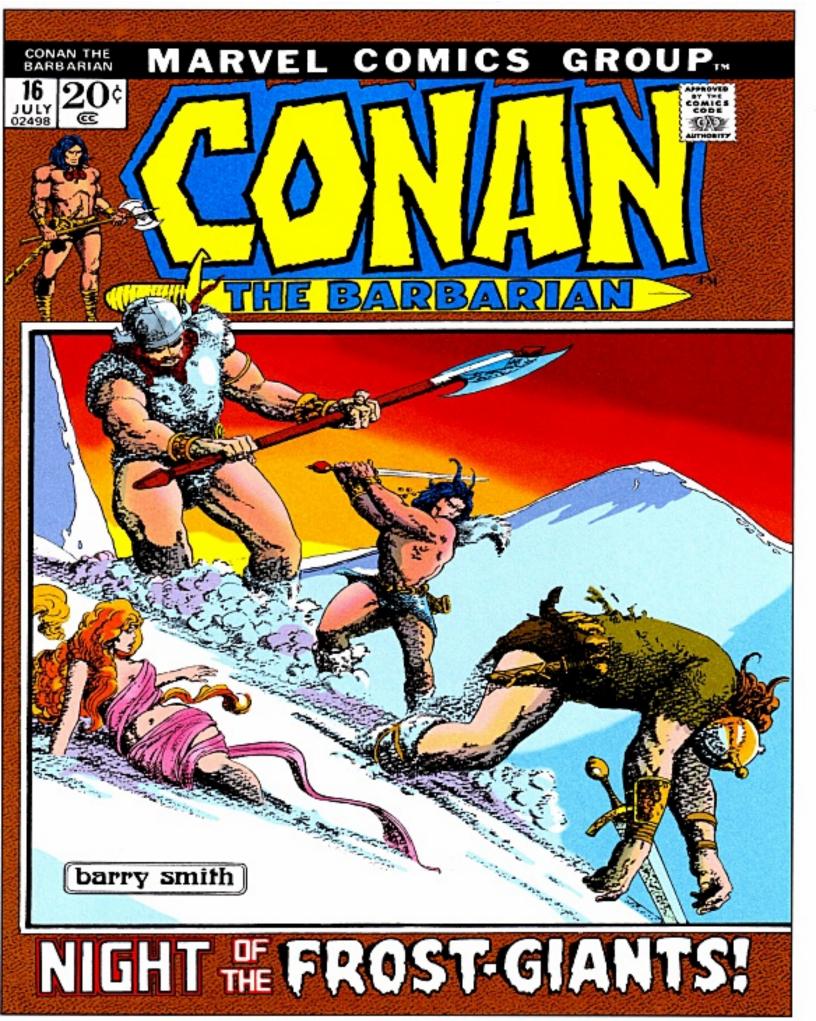
P.M.M. (Permanent Marvelite Maximus) —
sessing all four of the other titles.

F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) — An honor

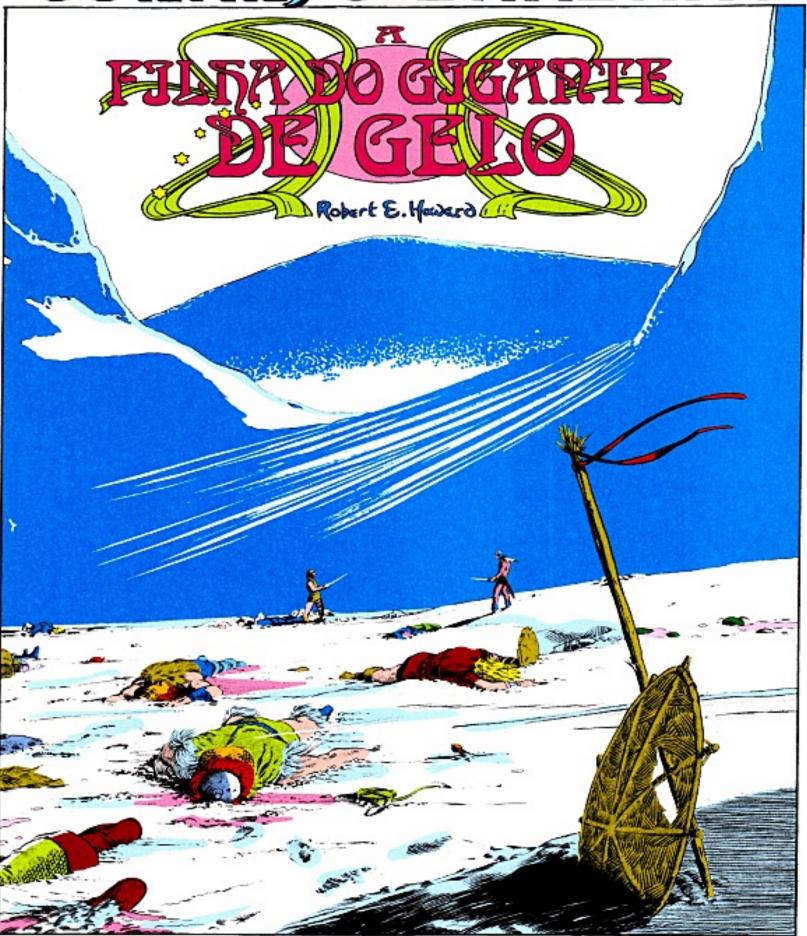
(Fearless Front-Facer) — An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty.

(Permanent Marvelite Maximus) -- Anyone pos-

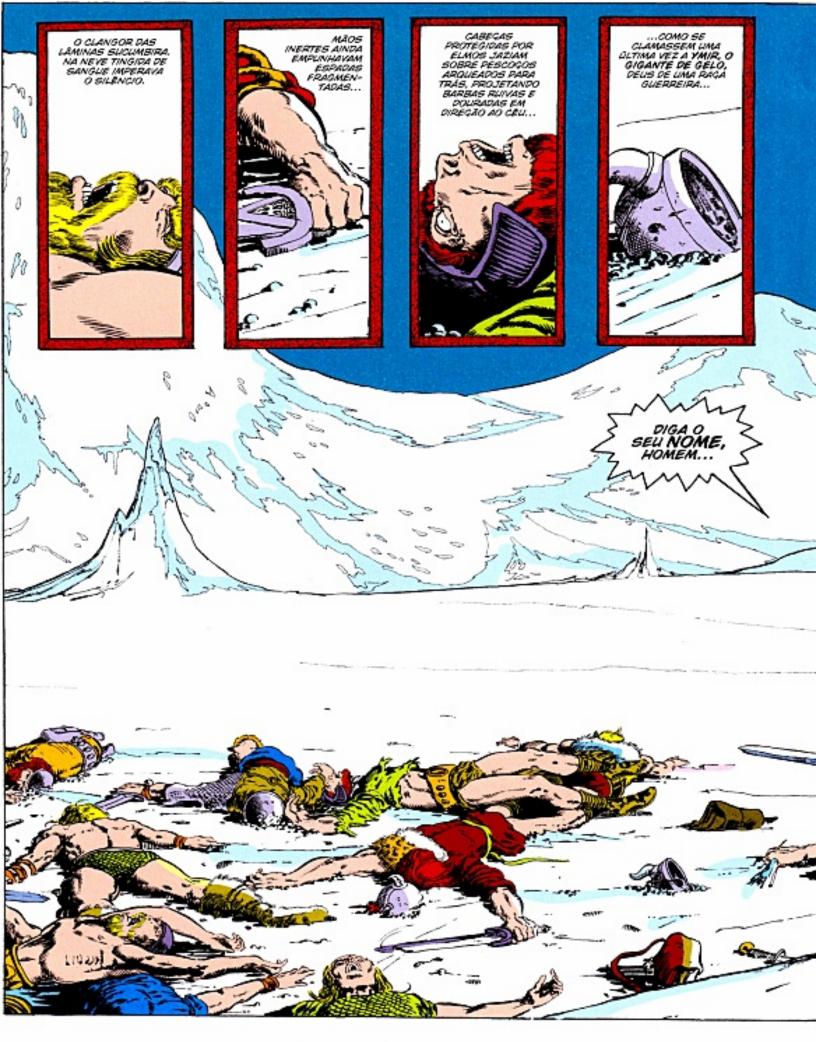


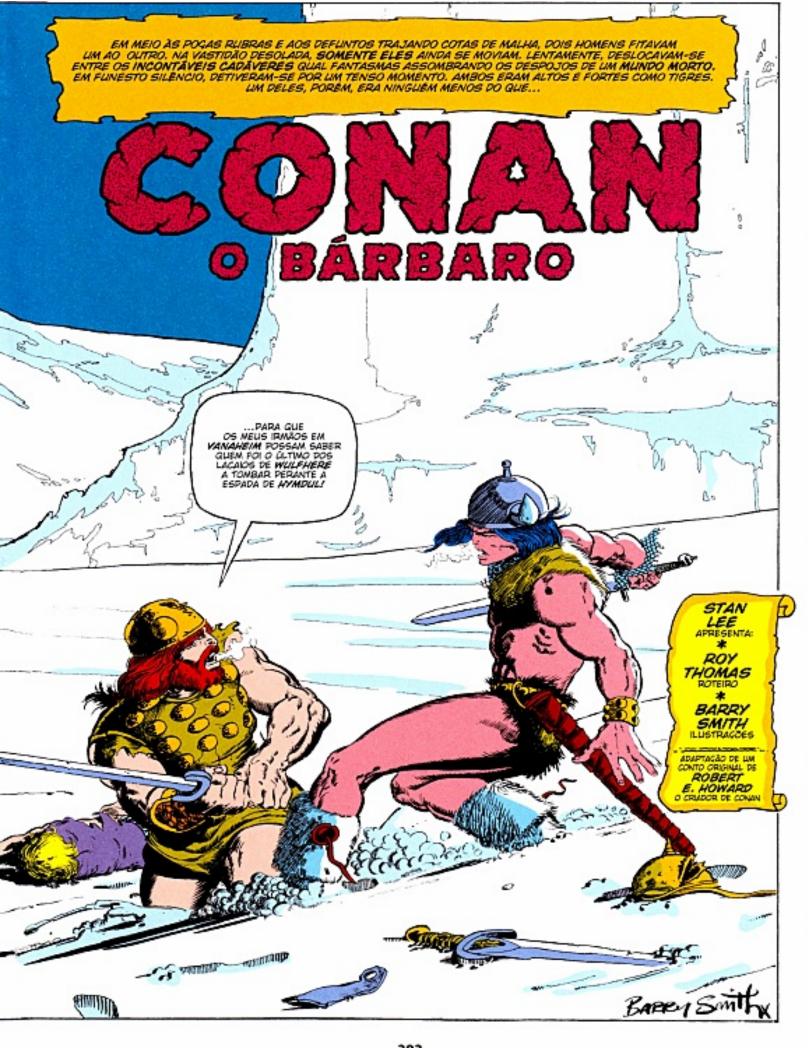


CORRD, O BARBARO



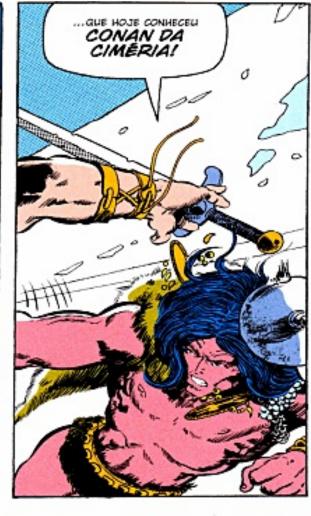
História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 16 (julho/1972)











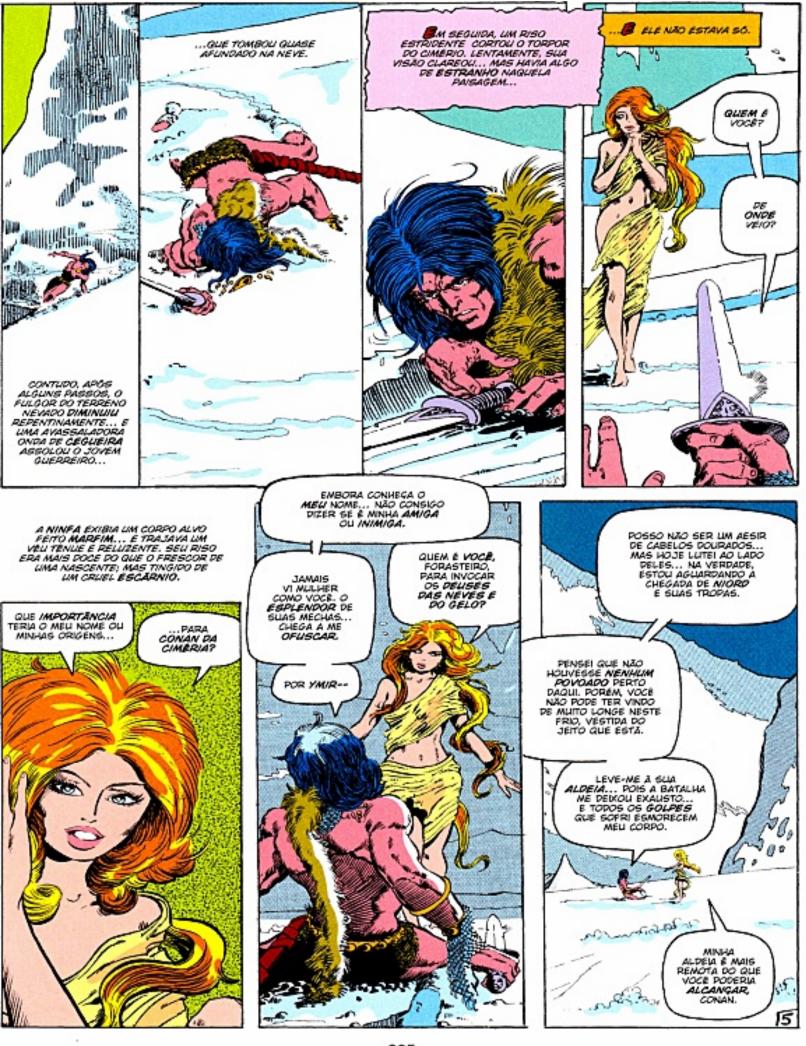
AFOGANDO-SE NO PRÓPRIO SANGUE, O VANIR PERECEU AOS PÉS DE CONAN.





... QUANDO O BARBARO DEU AS COSTAS PARA SE AFASTAR DA PLANÍCIE FLAGELADA ONDE MATAPORES, TANTO LOIROS QUANTO RLIIVOS, JAZIAM IMBRICADOS NO AMPLEXO DA MORTE.







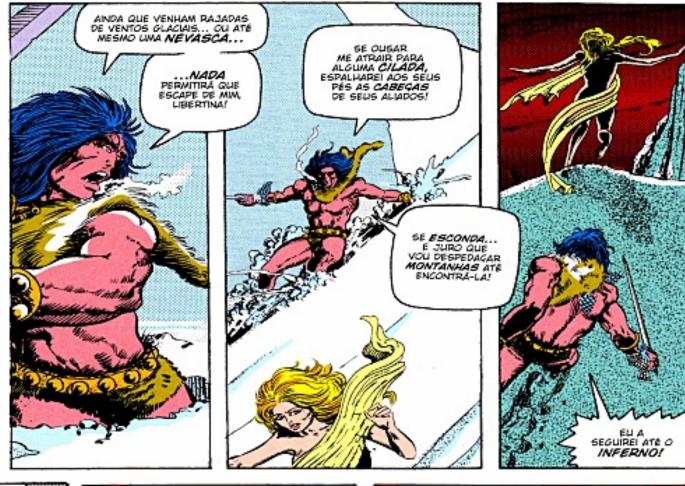


















COM SUAS COTAS DE MALMA RELUZINDO QUAL UMA GRADA AO NASCER DO SOL... E OSTENTANDO NOS OLHOS AUSTEROS UM ASSOMBROSO FULGOR... OS DOIS TITAS RESPONDERAM COM ROSNADOS QUE LEMBRAVAM O ESTENDOR DE UM ICEBERG



AINDA ASSIM, O ENSANDECIDO CIMERIO INVESTILI CONTRA ELESI



MO MESMO MOMENTO, UM
MACHAPO GLACIAL SIBILOU A
CENTÍMETROS POS OLHOS DE
CONAN... COM UM BRILHO INTENSO
A PONTO DE QUASE CEGÃ-LO.



MATEM O BÁRBARO, IRMÃOS! MATEM LOGO! ELE NÃO PASSA DE CARNE E OGGOS!

POREM, TODO E GUALGUER
VESTIGIO DE ESCÁRNIO
DESAPARECEU DO ROSTO
DA NINFA GUANDO A ESPADA
DE CONAN TRAGOU UM
DEVASTADOR ARCO NO AR...

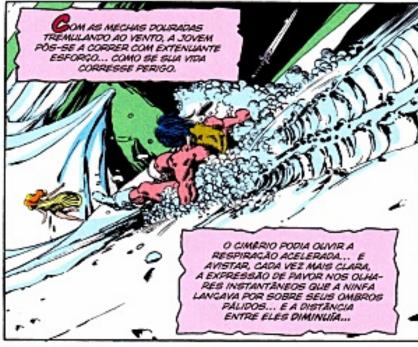
SVOCANDO UMA DERRADEIRA
DESCARGA DE PODER DIVINO,
A TITÂNICA ENTIDADE SE
AVOLUMOU SOBRE O CIMÉRIO...
COMO SE FOSSE UM COLOSSO
ESCULPIDO EM GELO.



















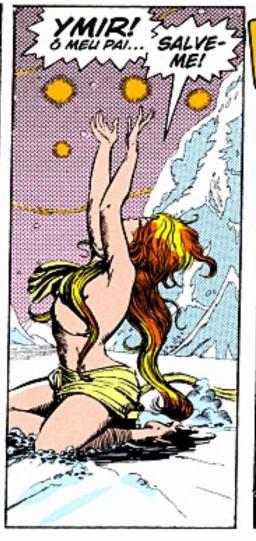


...A NINFA CONSEGUIU DESVENCILHAR-SE DOS BRAÇOS DE CONAN.







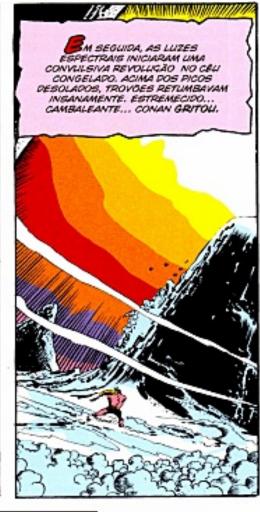




CELESTE.













DESFALECIDO NA NEVE...
PARA JAZER INERTE...

...EM SILENCIO MORTAL.

II,

... E O CIMBRIO, ENFIM, TOMBOU



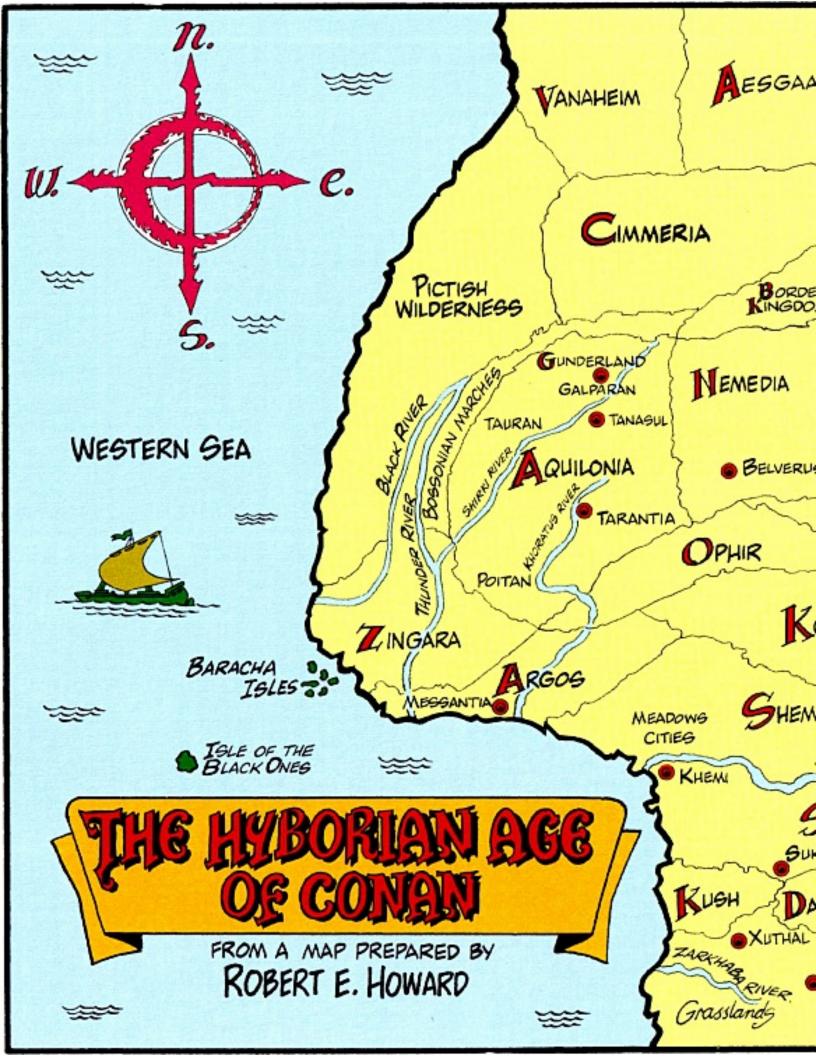






BRUPTAMENTE, OS GUERREIROS EMUDECEM. EM SEPULCRAL SILÊNCIO, TODOS FITAM ATÓNITOS O RETALHO TREMULANTE NO CERRADO PUNHO ESQUERDO DE CONAN.

ze-fini



403

SPECIAL SURPRISE NOTE:

Since our dramatic announcement last time around that Barry Smith had asked to be relieved from duty on CONAN, we're overloyed to say he's had a change of heart! Thus, although the next two issues have indeed been artfully penciled by galvanizin' Gil Kane, by CONAN #19 our talented young Britisher should be back at the artistic helm of comicdom's first and foremost swordand-sorcery strip in the classic tradition!

Meanwhile, for a multitude of reasons, we've decided to reprint — if that's the proper word for it — Roy and Barry's powerful adaptation of REH's "The Frost Giant's Daughter," which occurs on one of the Cimmerian's many trips back to the frozen North. We hope those of you who were lucky enough to find a copy of our late lamented black and white magazine SAVAGE TALES will enjoy seeing it in full color this time; and if you didn't scrounge up a copy of S.T. #1-and-only, well then - what are we worried about?

So stick around, swashbuckler - we're back on a monthly schedule, KULL THE CONQUEROR is alive and well, Solomon Kane is coming soon, and the end is nowhere in sight!

Roy and Barry:
"The Dweller in the Dark" is probably the most important story yet to appear in the series, and surely it will cause a degree of controversy. For, in this issue, for the very first time, you showed Conan cold-bloodedly murdering someone when his life was not in immediate danger. This "someone" was a woman, no less. I'm referring to the startling sequence wherein Conan dumps Queen Fatima into the Dweller's pit. This was not only the most deliberately grisly thing I've ever seen in a comic, but it was probably the most hard-hearted act ever performed by Conan in any of the stories in which he has appeared, either in comics or paperback. I'm sure many of the fans who counsel you to follow the Conan saga as set down by Howard disapproved of this incident. After all, up until now, much has been made of Conan's roughly chivalric "code" regarding women. You guys blew that whole routine to bits in just one page, and I guess there were some complaints. For my part, I thought it the most exciting and innovative stroke yet displayed by you two. You've proven that Conan's urge to survive is so strong that he'll kill anyone if his own life depends on it. His enemies, whether male or female, are enemies nonetheless, and subject to Conan's fast and furious wrath. You've made him more of a barbarian than even Howard did, and you've certainly improved on the diluted version offered by deCamp and Carter.

Other aspects of "The Dweller in the Dark" deserve praise. For one thing, it was a masterpiece of economy — a fully developed and wildly exciting fantasy yarn neatly wrapped up in fifteen pages. The pacing was beyond reproach and the dialogue, as usual, was better than the usual sword-and-sorcery fare. In my opinion, only Fritz Leiber, of all the various American fantasists, matches Roy's ability to put witty, character-revealing words in the mouths of his characters.

The artwork was the best so far, Barry's inking being nothing short of miraculous. The appearance of the Dweller on page ten was so awesome as to be worth more than the price of the magazine all by itself. Barry has captured the eerie essence of Howardian creatures as perhaps no other artist would be able to. The expression on the Dweller's face was nightmarish. And the anatomical detail and pale coloring (which was brilliant throughout - who did it?) made this monster so convincing that it seemed highly possible that he might slither right up off the printed page.

There was little caption narration during the ensuing battle, and this was all to the good, since in the past you've cluttered up quite a few fights with almost irrelevant narration. The dialogue during the fight was mostly very good, though the first panel on page 12 was

a bit too cute. I don't think Conan, while being squeezed to death, would have taken the time to sarcastically answer Yaila's screaming. That's a minor point, though, and I suppose it's just a matter of personal taste; certainly it didn't in the least detract from this remarkable and startlingly blood-stained issue.

Tom Steinke, 87 Udalia Ct. West Islip, N.Y. 11795

Not that Roy and Barry went out of their way to make CONAN #12 more savage than usual, Tom - they just do what comes naturally and let the action take care of itself — but they're glad you and other Conan-watchers

Maybe a few belated words about "The Dweller in the Dark" are in order, for the kind of person who'd rather watch a play from behind the stage than in front of it: "The Dweller in the Dark" was originally planned for our black- and-white SAVAGE TALES (#2). Interestingly, because bashful Barry was still in his native England at the time, it was necessary for him both to pencil and ink the story before mailing it to our unabashed author, who had of course plotted the tale in the first place. Each word-balloon and caption was then pasted lovingly in place by our peerless production department.

Unfortunately, because of various differences between preparing material for color comic-books and for blackand-white magazines, we feel the reproduction of the story in CONAN #12 was considerably poorer than usual. In other words, people, if you noticed a slight fuzziness in certain aspects of the art that issue, you'll have to take our word - and Tom Steinke's - for it that the art-

work was some of Barry's best to date!

Hopefully, the repro on this semi-reprint of the Conan tale in SAVAGE TALES #1 has fared better because the beleaguered Bullpen had more time to work on it.

Incidentally, both stories this ish were colored by Barry himself. Sheesh — whatever happened to all the mystery concerning who did what in a comic-book, any-

And now, here are a few briefer comments on the more controversial aspects of our rapturously-received. dozenth issue:

Gentlemen:

In issue #12 Roy Thomas has Conan deliberately kill a woman, Queen Fatima. Anyone who has read all the Conan text stories will tell you that Conan's "code of acquired from his barbarian parents and fellows, honor. forbids his killing a woman, except to spare her great suffering. I will admit this is rather imprudent on occasion, especially if the woman he will not kill has no scruples against killing him, but Conan will not kill a woman in cold blood. Dumping Jenna into a cesspool was more his style; he might have used Fatima as a shield so that he and Yaila could escape, but he would never have dropped her down to the Dweller in the Dark. Please — read Howard's own stories, learn from them, and never make a goof like this again!

Jeffrey May, 1603 E. Division Springfield, Mo. 65803

We've said it before and we've gotta say it again: Roy has read each Conan tale at least once, and most of them more often than that. He is and was as aware as anyone that Conan has what has been described as a "roughly chivalric code toward woman" - and maybe, just maybe, Roy goofed on the occasion in question, though fellow-correspondent Tom Steinke seems to feel just the opposite.

Tell you what, Jeff, we'll make a deal with you: If you can supply us with an actual Robert E. Howard quote (not just internal evidence, but an honest-to-Crom quote) to back up your allegation that Conan's code forbids him to kill a woman, Roy for his part will admit that he should have plotted the tale differently. We're not saying there isn't such a quote, but surely Roy has

a family right to be a -- er -- "doubting Thomas."

(An unabashed aside: Even as things stand, Roy admits that he wishes he had worded Conan's dialogue instead so that he didn't say he "killed" her - but rather that he had merely dropped her into the pit, and that if she could swim faster than the Dweller, she was safe. If not, well....)





THE DEVILLEON OF BALLSAGOTH!



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 17 (agosto/1972)



















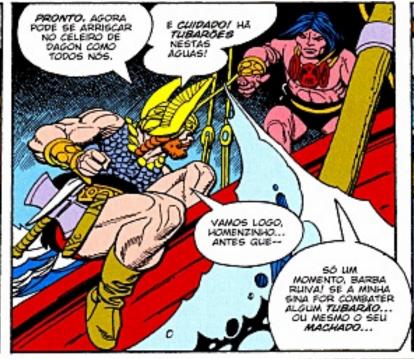
















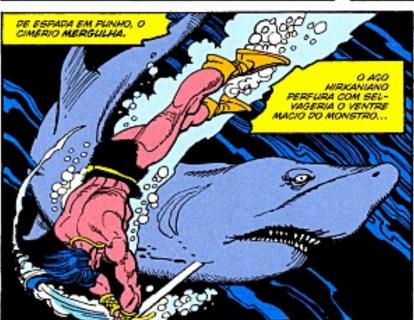


































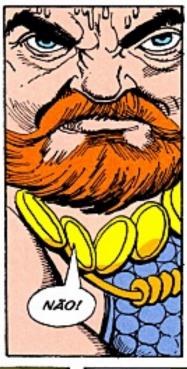


















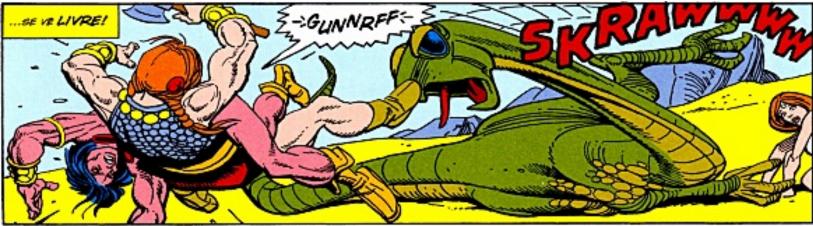


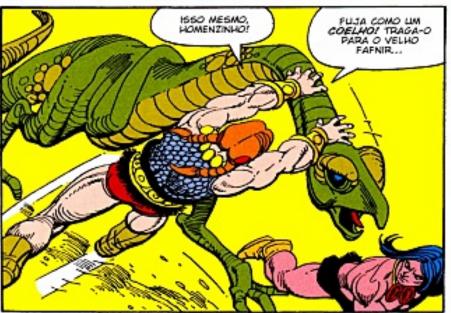


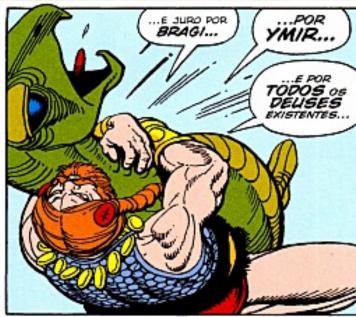




















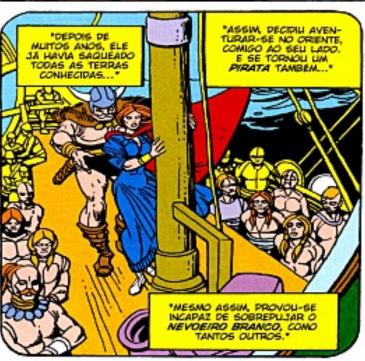






















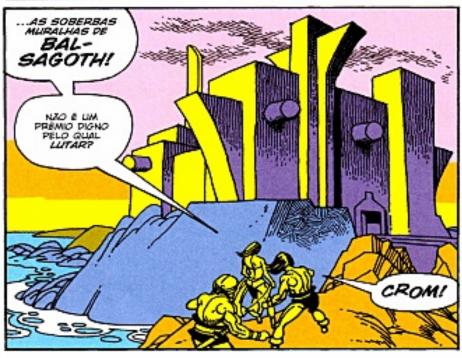




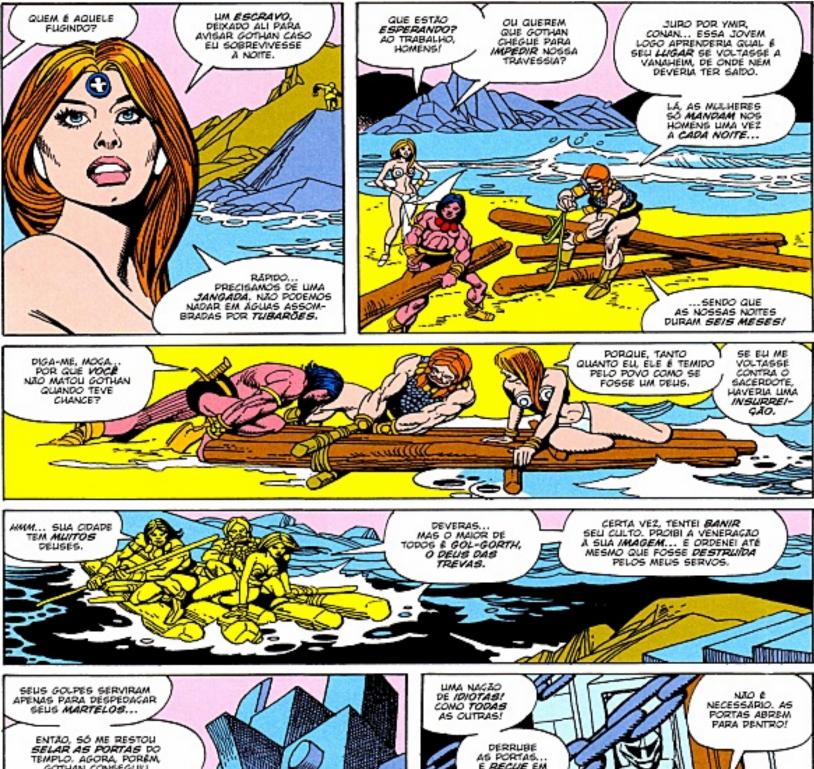


















SE HÀ ALGUMA RESPOSTA EM MEIO AO BURBURINHO FURTIVO, O CIMERIO NÃO A ESCUTA. NA VERDADE, SEU OLHAR FOI ATRAIDO POR UM CERTO INDIVIDUO. UM HOMEM MUITO IDOSO E ESGUIO, CUJO SEMBLANTE DESENCADEIA CALAFRIOS EM CONAN... COMO SE ELE ESTIVESSE FITANDO O OLHAR VITREO DE UMA GRANDE SERPENTE.



NO MESMO INS-TANTE, O BĂRBARO PERCEBE QUE ESTĂ ENCARANDO...

















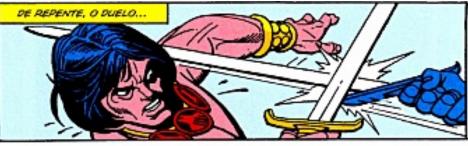




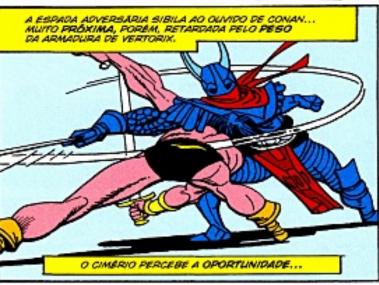
























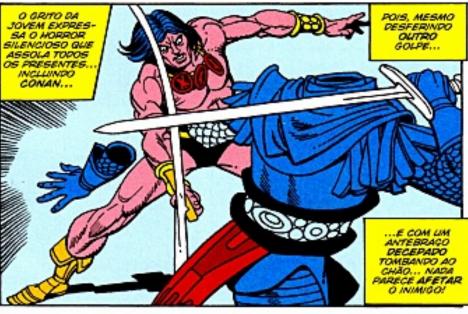














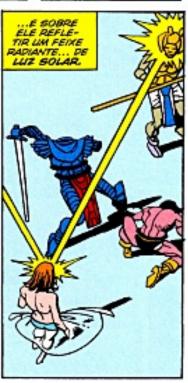


































THE HYBORIAN PAGE

Dear Chroniclers:

I like writing letters like this because I've got all sorts

of nice things to say.

First, although this has been said many times already, I want to make sure there are no doubts on your part: Barry Smith is fantastic and is the only artist for Conan. Each panel is a work of art, utilizing a wealth of detail and background material, re, page eleven, beautiful! Sal Buscema's inks are highly complimentary and I see no need for any change here either.

Secondly, and no less important, are the plotting and dialogue. Roy seems to have captured the essence of the Hyborian Age and his adaptations have been quite consistent with the originals. His own non-Howard stories are also well done and hold up well in their own right. Conan himself is a solid, believable character who speaks what he thinks, refreshingly free of the archaic bragadaccio of most Marvel heroes, and glory be—when you cut him he bleeds!

You know, it's funny that this mag which makes no concessions to reality, and is based on a totally fictitious premise is by far the most consistent and believable of all. The conflicts are real and not foregone conclusions

from the first page.

Chris Hoth, 22352 Gregory Dearborn, Mich. 48124

Y'know, Chris — even though we ourselves are pleased as punch with this issue's (and next issue's) penciling jobs by Gil Kane — and even though we're naturally glad you dig Barry Smith's work on the mag, the more so since he'll be returning to it with #19 — it gives us a real kick to see so many frantic fans declaiming that our bashful young Britisher is the "only" artist for CONAN. Mainly 'cause we seem to recall a time when an equal number of hardy souls were crying equally loud that a talented titan named Frank Frazetta was the "only" artist who could possibly draw him, and how dare anyone else even try!

Well, Barry did try — and the fact that he succeeded admirably is proved both by the mag's continued monthly publication and the number of Shazam nominations it's garnered on this year's ballot (as tabulated elsewhere on this selfsame page). But, we don't think either that Barry is necessarily the only artist who could draw Conan, or that Roy Thomas is the only person who could possibly script it! It's just that this harried, hardworking pair has done a great job — and we're overjoyed to see that they'll soon be pulling in harness again! Now

that's 'nuff said!

Masters of Fantasy:

Wonder of wonders! "Web of the Spider-God" in CONAN #13, was far and away the best of Marvel's CONAN tales to appear to date! I must admit I'd been disappointed by #10 and #12. CONAN, I thought, was done for — which just goes to show how wrong a hastily-drawn conclusion can be! The plot by John Jakes (I'm sorry to say I've never read any of his Brak stories), coupled with Roy's obviously well-thought-out script and Barry's superb pencils made this issue a delight from cover to cover, and I must thank you! One last question: When are we going to see an adaptation of Howard's classic, "Queen of the Black Coast"?

Marc DeMattas, 1100 Ocean Ave. Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230

Not for a while, Marc. According to our own rough tabulation, our barbarian hero spent a fair amount of time wandering thru the various Hyborian kingdoms and Turan to the east - before wandering west toward Argos and an unguessed rendezvous with destiny and a pirate-queen named Belit! Hence this issue's tale, which takes place in the fabled inland body of water known as the Vilayet Sea (see last issue's map) - and which will lead into a several-issue epic which Roy and Barry plan to start in ish #19. Since we plan to do the Conan stories in sequence, that means it'll be a few issues (at least) before Thomas and Smith get around to chronicling any more REH Conan tales - but meanwhile, as we've stated before, we have other Howard prose lined up for you, including the current two-parter freely adapted from the REH swashbuckler "The Gods of Bal-Sagoth" and another surprise saga or twain lurking in the months to come! Stick around, friend - and meanwhile, if you want more of John Jakes, try picking up the next issue of our companion-mag KULL THE CONQUEROR, which was plotted by none other than the talented creator of Brak the Barbarian!

SPECIAL SHAZAM SALUTE!

Well, it's that time again — the season of the year when the recently-formed Academy of Comic Book Arts (composed of just about every major professional in the whacky world of comix) gives out its annual Shazam awards! By the time you're reading these perishable bon mots, ACBA will be holding its May banquet at which the winners of the actual awards will be announced; but meanwhile, here's a late listing of some of the major nominations. (And, when you sneak a peak at the names thereon, you'll see why we stuck it on "The Hyborian Page"!)

Anyway, here are a few of the high spots, with nomi-

nees in alphabetical order (what else?):

Best penciler: Neal Adams, John Buscema, John Romita, Barry Smith.

Best inker: Frank Giacoia, Dick Giordano, Tom Palmer,

Joe Sinnott.

Best writer: Archie Goodwin, Denny O'Neil, Roy Thomas.

Best continuing feature: CONAN THE BARBARIAN;

GREEN LANTERN; SPIDER-MAN.

Best individual story: "Devil-Wings over Shadizar" (CONAN #6); "Snowbirds Don't Fly" (GREEN LANTERN #86); "Swamp Thing" (HOUSE OF SECRETS #92); "The Tower of the Elephant" (CONAN #4).

Nominees for Special Achievement by an Individual:

Jack Kirby, Stan Lee, Barry Smith.

Nominees for ACBA Hall of Fame: Will Eisner, Jack

Kirby, Stan Lee.

Oh yeah — and this issue's artist Gil Kane (who conceived the recent paperback comic called Blackmark) is vying with Bill Spicer's fanzine Graphic Story Magazine for a Special Recognition award.

Okay — there you have it — some of the major contenders for the 1971 Shazam awards! What's more, we hereby promise and pronounce that — win, lose, or draw — Marvel will print the full list of winners in each and every division, during the summer months to come! Now, let's see our Distinguished Competition match that

little guarantee!

And incidentally, for those clamoring few of you who still haven't become Supporting Members of ACBA—the special category open to fans and friends of comix in general—you can still learn how to get in on the whole scene (including fan-awards, sketchbooks, membership cards, and the whole magilla) by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Academy of Comic Book Arts, 9 E-48th St. 3rd fl., New York City, N.Y. 10017!

Tell 'em Marvel sent you, huh - as if they aren't

gonna know!

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel mags a month.

T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) - A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner.

Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.

K.O.F.

(Keeper Of the Flame) — One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks. (Permanent Marvelite Maximus) — Anyone pos-

P.M.M. (Permanent Marvelite Maximus) sessing all four of the other titles.

F.F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) - An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty.



BARBARO TROMBETAS DOURADAS RESSOAM UMA FANFARRA DE TRIUNFO INCONTESTE... TAMBORES RUFAM... CÂNTICOS DE I**DOLATRIA** ECOAM PELO CEU ENCOBERTO POR UMA BRUMA ALVA. UMA VEZ MAIS, AALA E A RAINHA DA CIDADELA DE TORRES MAJES-TOSAS DENOMINADA BAL-SAGOTH. E AO SEU LADO MARCHAM DOIS GIGANTES: CONAN DA CIMERIA E O ENORME FAFNIR, UM GUERREIRO RUIVO EGRESSO DE VANAHEIM. HISTÓRIA ADAPTADA DO CONTO STAN LEE ORGULHOSA OS DEUSES DE BAL-SAGOTH DE ROBERT E. HOWARD, O CRIADOR DE

13/11/11/11/1 História originalmente publicada em Conan the Barbarian 18 (setembro/1972)

ROY THOMAS * GIL KANE

DAN ADKINS ARTE-FINAL

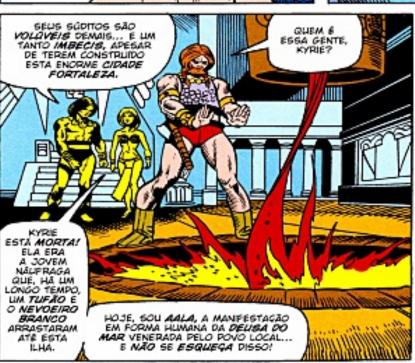
CONAN.



















































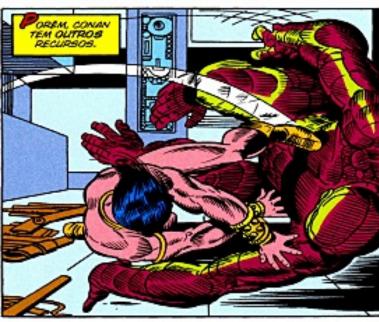






























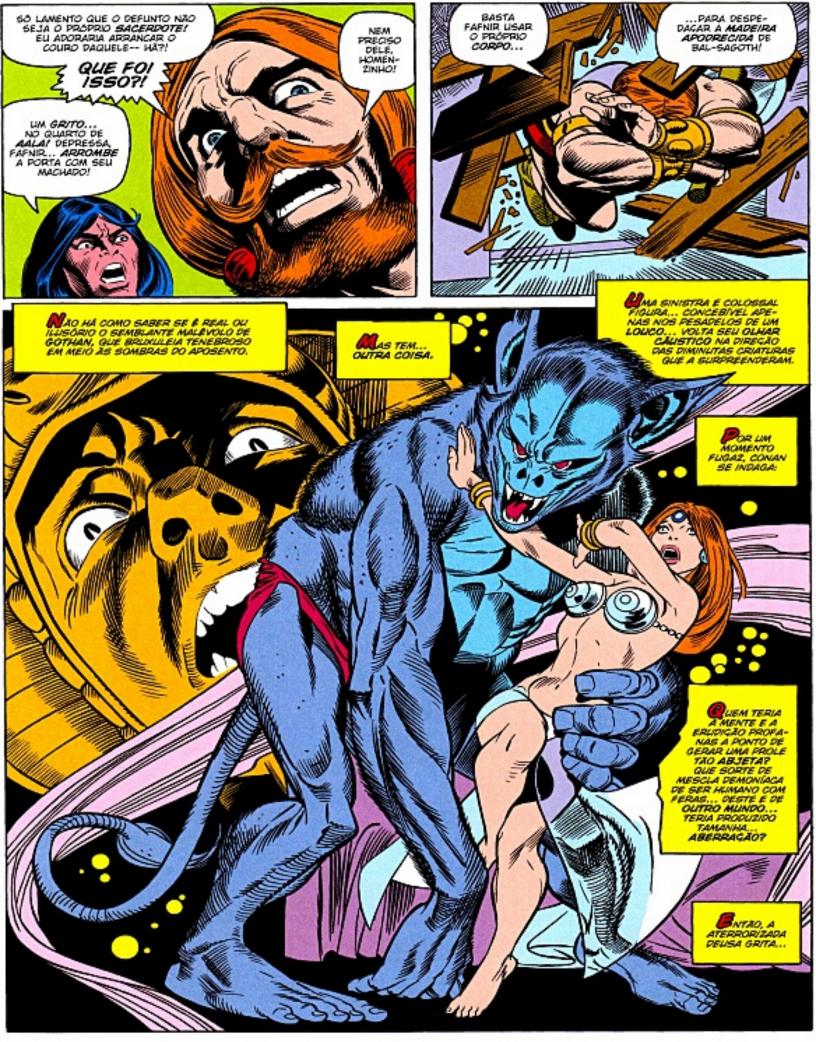


















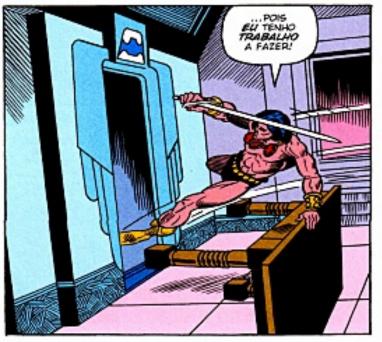






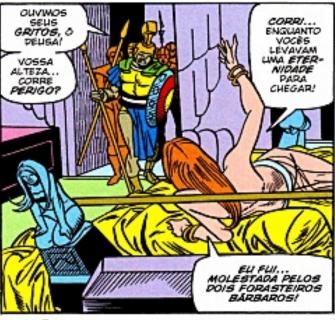












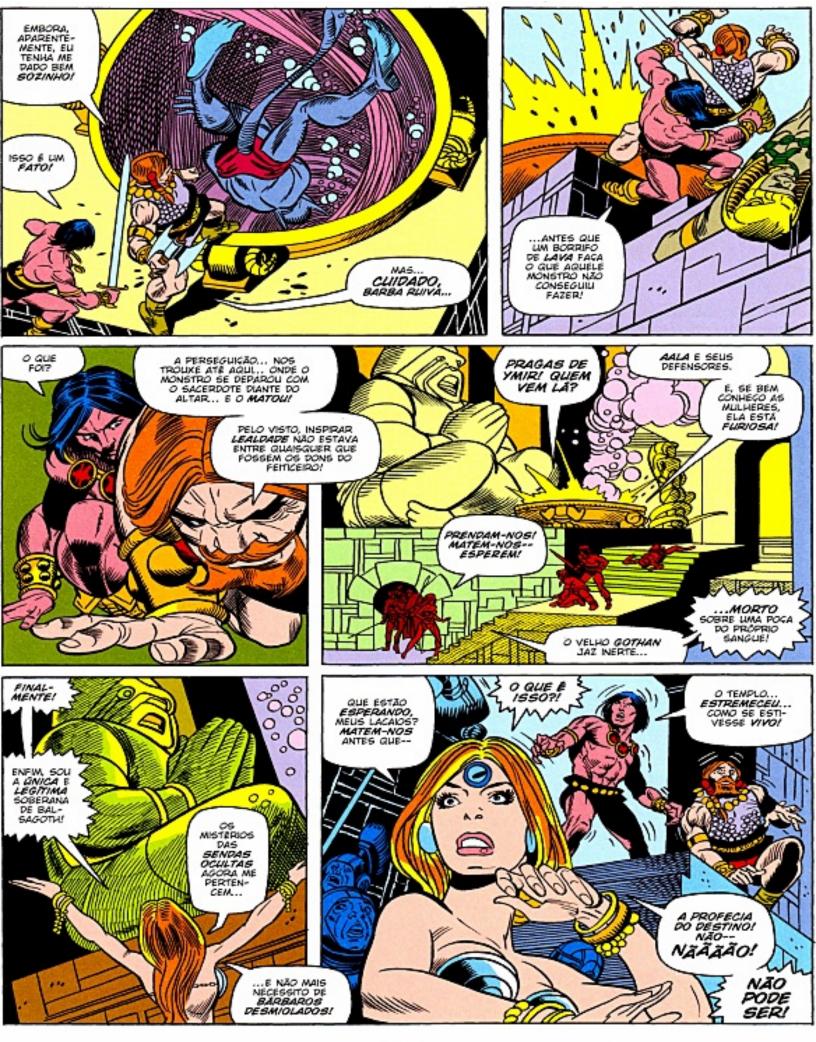
























































































ICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

Conan #14 was, of course, as good as ever, but I detected a certain cue which I hope will not develop into a trend. The introduction of Melniboné, a world in another plane, pushes Conan into a cosmic picture, and the Barbarian becomes a "superhero." He is definitely not that, but rather a savage venturing in some dark corner of the earth. What makes Conan so superior to any other magazine is not only because it is artistic, lyrical, and elegant, but because it is earthy. I have never read a magazine with so much engrossment, zeal, and loss of identity, partly because your personae are far from being stereotypes. A few examples will suffice: Dunlang with the huge forehead (Conan #3); Murilo, a prince with carmine locks (#11); and Fatima the haggish queen (#12). These are people we witness for years in books and films and expect to see again, but never in so discriminating a light as in Conan. Your magnificent sidelights in each episode remind us that life is deviant and not straight and patterned. And yet, Conan contains just that amount of sorcery and mysticism to charm us. It is fantasical but Conan is naked and human and fights with a blade, and we believe and live it. We do not question that somewhere in a time-forgotten era, there once existed a Tower of the Elephant, a Yezud, transformed monstrosities, and an intelligent gorilla race. You mesmerize us with your tales of what nature, infused with the mind of man gone mad, can bear...but when you give us Melniboné, another world interwined with ours. we begin to doubt. The whole experience is slightly jarred from savage with sword to epic saviour of the universe. What ensues will be villains from another galaxy, dimensional contacts, ultra-powerful machines, and Conan's mystic realm metamorphosed into a philosophy of super science.

In my biased opinion, that is what I foresee if Conan is not contained to our earth. Conan is not Thor or Dr. Strange, which encompass the cosmos, spawns a system and expounds it. Conan has no system and everywhere the Cimmerian goes is shrouded in nature mystery. What we cannot explain and what enchants us we call sorcery. Conan is exactly that. Please don't

change it.

Chung Wong, 55 Pike St., Apt. 2A New York, N.Y. 10002

We don't intend to, friend. The Moorcock/Thomas/ Smith collaboration was strictly a one-shot deal (though we'd hardly mind devoting a whole series to the mournful Melnibonéan if enough readers demanded it). We're strictly in your corner on the matter of avoiding earthshaking, world-saving quests for Conan; we just couldn't resist that single sensational team-up of the original sword-and-sorcery hero with the most original, most dramatic of his rightful successors. 'Nuff said, we hope?

Dear Roy and Barry:

"A Sword Called Stormbringer" was a disturbing story. It was crowded, verbose, and overwritten. The introduction of Melniboné was never successfully accomplished (one gets the idea that Roy expected everyone to be familiar with the Elric novels), and was confused by the scanty clues about the nature of Xiombarg. The pages were a malthusian nightmare of characters and names - the pointless re-introduction of Zephra and Zukala in such a drastically changed form (and Zukala never struck me as the type who would serve someone called the Lord of Laws); it would have been better to use two new characters - Khulan-Gath, Thoth-Amon, the Green Empress of Yagala, the Queen of Chaos Swords, Gaynor, Elric himself. .

As for being over-written - "...red with the lifeblood of base-slain maiden . . . if wildly waving scimitars bring

down their auburn-haired prey...!" REH would never have so pretentiously striven for images, would never have used a pseudo-poetic style to such little adventage. And there were endless introductions, wordy explana-

tions that never seemed to explain a whole lot.

Well, there were good points. The characterization of Conan was superb throughout — his suspicion of Zukala, his rash attack on Elric, his fear of and dislike of sorcery. The line about valuing Crom because he doesn't bother with the lives of men was Howard incarnate. And after all the scenes had been set, all the myriad characters introduced, Roy and Barry gave us the most magnificent battle scene ever, Conan and Elric against the Chaos Pack.

I look forward to the second half of this epic with high hopes that you will overcome the obstacles that plagued this issue. The potential is obviously there, as you have

already proven.

Juan Cole, Northwestern Univ., 1960 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, III. 60201

And we look forward with temerity and trepidation to your comments on issue #15, Juan. Meanwhile, Roy and Barry would like to go on record here and now as freely admitted that it was they, and they alone, who — for better or for worse — drafted Zukala and Zephra into their co-starring roles in CONAN #14-15. The many-talented Mr. Moorcock's original plot did indeed introduce a new wizard and daughter, as you would have wished; but Roy and Barry thought (and continue to think) that the return of two characters from issue #5 might tie the story in to the Conan saga rather better. So far, you're the only one who's complained - so maybe we'd better quit while we're ahead and go on to our next letter....

Dear Roy

CONÁN has come a long way since you sent me stats of the first issue, and I'm happy to say that the improvement has borne out my early enthusiasm. Barry Smith has definitely matured as an artist on this strip, and your own scripting is some of the best I've seen in comics. Clearly a work of love like this brings out the

best in both of you.

By the way, inasmuch as you've mentioned associated books, etc., in your letters column, I wonder if you could tell your readers about FANTASTIC STORIES. As you know, ours is the only sf/fantasy magazine which presently publishes sword & sorcery fiction — along, of course, with a wide variety of other kinds of fantasy. In our February issue we published Mike Moorcock's "The Sleeping Sorceress," his first new Elric novella in years—and a fitting companion to "A Sword Called Stormbringer" in the March CONAN.

More important, we've got a new Conan novella coming up in our August issue—which, by some coincidence, is also our 20th Anniversary Issue. The story is "The Witch of the Mists," and it's written by L. Sprague deCamp and Lin Carter, who, as you know, have been editing and filling in the blank spots in the Conan saga for Lancer Books. (Sprague also does a semi-regular feature for us, "Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers, which he writes about the great fantasy writers of the

past.) Spread the word, okay?

Ted White, Editor: AMAZING, FANTASTIC P.O. Box 409, Falls Church, Va. 22046

Anytime, Ted. It's always a pleasure to hear from a knowledgeable of and comix fan like yourself — especi-ally since it was a nostalgia piece on early comix (later collected into the volume All in Color for a Dime) which helped introduce our own spanking-new editor Roy Thomas to the wondrous world of fandom, lo, these toomany years ago. Meanwhile, we know you plan a review of the CONAN issues to date in a near-future ish of FANTASTIC, to boot — and we hope the mag fares as well there as it did on the Hyborian Page! Keep those swashes buckling, friend!

YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM: KNOW

(Real Frantic One)-A buyer of at least 3 Marvel R.F.O. mags a month.

(Titanic True Bellever) - A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner. T.T.B.

(Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed. O.N.S.

(Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.
(Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone possessing all four of the other titles. K.O.F.

P.M.M. (Fearless Front-Facer) — An honorary title be-stowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty. F.F.F.



BARBARC O MAR VILAYET: MUITOS O DEFINEM COMO UM GRANDE LAGO TURANIANO, AFINAL, SUA VASTIDÃO AQUÁTICA É DUTURNAMENTE PATRULHADA PELAS PODEROSAS GALERAS MULITARES DE VELAS PORPURAS DO REI YILDIZ DE TURAN. O MONARCA NÃO MEDE ESFORÇOS PARA PROTEGER A RICA NAVEGAÇÃO MERICANTIL QUE ABADDITA SUI TECOUDO. QUE ABARROTA SEU TESOURO. HOJE, POREM, ENQUANTO O SOL MERGULHA FULGURANTE NO LONGINQUO HORIZONTE, A PATRULHA È ESQUECIDA... LEVANDO UM TACITURNO BARBARO DE CABELOG NEGROS A SE INDAGAR O PORQUE. CONTINUANDO AS AVENTURAS DO BÁRBARO CRIADO POR ROBERT E. HOWARD BARRY SMITH STAN LEE APRESENTA ROY THOMAS * DAN ADKINS * ARTE-FINAL

História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 19 (outubro/1972)























































VALIDOS.*

POENTE."











PARA COMANDAR
SUAS HORDAS NO COMBATE
A MAKKALET, O SABIO YILDIZ
NÃO PODERIA CONFIAR EM
NINGUÉM... A NÃO SER
NO PROPRIO FILHO
E HERDEIRO.

EU, YEZDIGERD...
O PRINCPE QUE, ALGUM DIA,
EXPANDRÁ AS FRONTEIRAS
DE TURAN PARA ALÉM DOS
SONHOS MAIS OTWISTAS
DE SEU GENITOR!

E NÃO TENHAM DÚVIDA.. NOSSO TARIM **SERÃ** RESGATADO!

SEL. MAS POR QUE ELE PRECISA SER SALVO... SENDO A ENCAPNAÇÃO

















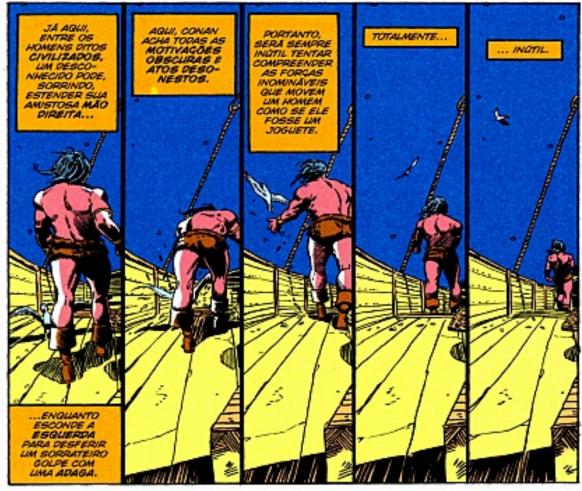




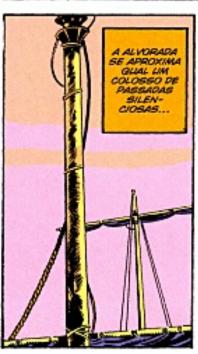


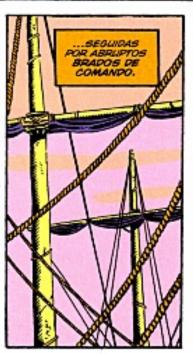














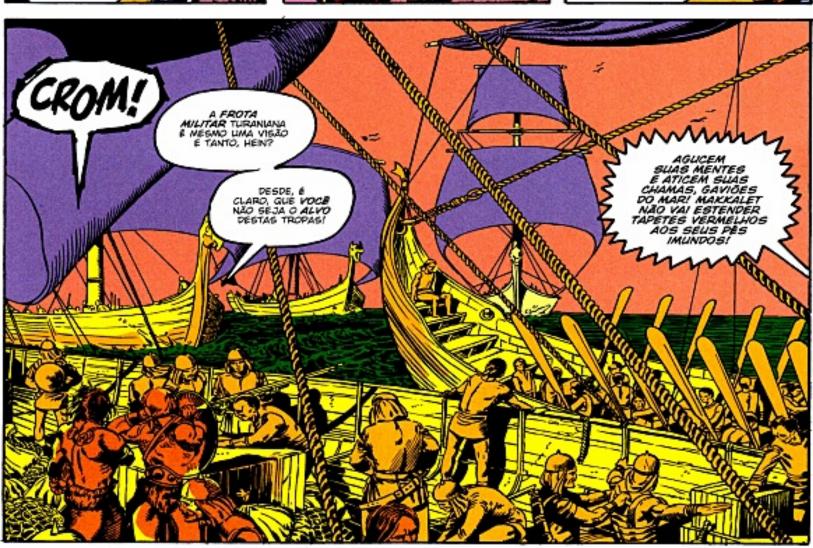


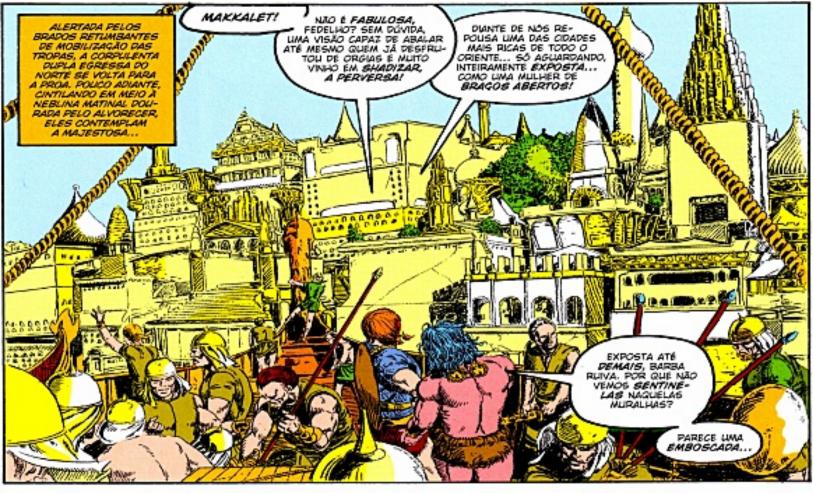


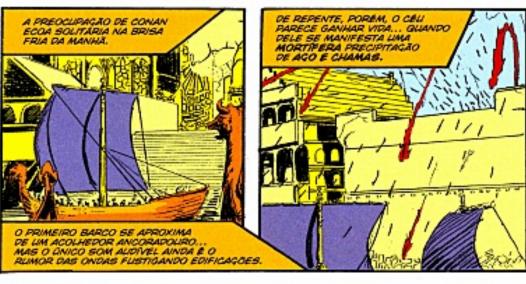


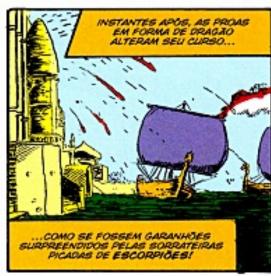






























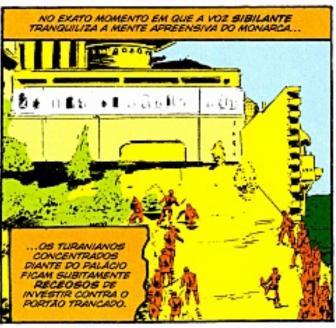


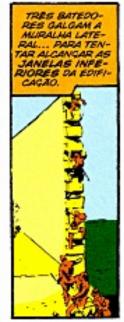














































































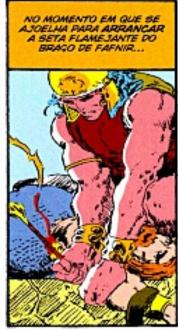


EM UM PASSADO





















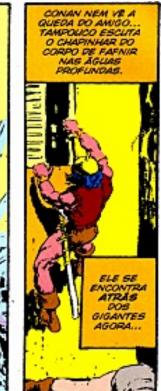








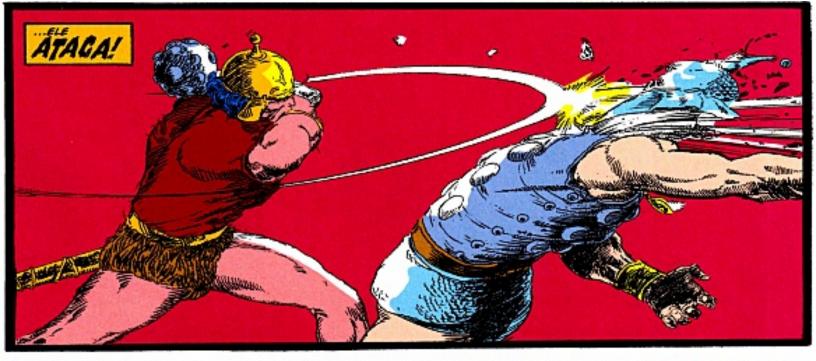










































THE HYBORIAN PAGE THE COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

The Hyborian Page in CONAN THE BARBARIAN #15 announced that, for reasons of his own, artist Barry Smith planned to leave the strip after that issue. Although the very next ish contained the equally startling news that he had changed his mind and would return to the mag as fulltime artist beginning with this issue (#19), the previous bulletin had already started a virtual avalanche of comments, cogitations, and protests. Here's a random sampling — and if they make it look as if Marveldom Assembled is just a wee bit fond of the sweat and blood which our Britisher-in-residence pours into each issue of comicdom's first and foremost sword-and-sorcery comic — well, so be it! To wit:

I salute the end of an era with the passing of Barry's artwork on CONAN. This series of 15 issues is the zenith of Marvel's creations since its inception. The masterful emergence of art and story in the sixth, eleventh, twelfth, and fifteenth issues left me spaced-out for days at a time and, in fact, still evoke moods of the magical and mystical within me even now. . . . (And forgive me, Roy — but having read a couple of the original stories, I've honestly got to state that you're a considerably better writer than Robert E. Howard!)

But Barry — I don't know what to write about that boy . . . Barry's art is a mixture of sparkles, jewels, distorted reality (in the form of giant Gila monsters and spiders), stark caricature, and opiated mood (I mean so heavy I could smell the incense). From the day Conan first rippled a nippled chest to the lingering of a lyrical scar across his cheek, he always seemed to have a realer existence than any other hero!

Alan Moniz (Address withheld)

Nothing can be said about the art in the past issues of CONAN that the final page of issue #15 can't say better! It is Barry Smith at his finest! All that remains to be said is simply . . . thanks.

Robert Reichman, 1431 Lancaster Ave. St. Louis Park, Minn. 55426

All good things must come to an end, I guess. I hope, however, that it won't be said one year from now that, "When Barry Smith left CONAN, it curled up and died."

How to prevent that? First of all, don't let Roy get any ideas that a vacation from CONAN would be a good idea! Barry may be impossible to replace as it is, but should both Barry and Roy leave — well, I hear CONAN's death-rattle just thinking about it!

C. C. Wilson, Monterey, Calif.

There are very few artists who work for comic-book companies these days who could be considered what I term an "effect artist." This type of artwork grows and flourishes; it seems to change thru the issues and becomes more devastatingly beautiful with each new panel. This maturing artwork also enriches the characterization of a hero, for as the artwork goes more into depth, more of the true character and personality of the hero is shown. Such an artist is Barry Smith, who — with his impeccable perspective and technique—has truly recreated what was pictured in the deep imagination of Robert E. Howard. Barry Smith's name will be remembered by many as the greatest visual recreator

of Conan after Frank Frazetta. It was almost as if Conan himself was bidding Barry good tidings on the last page of CONAN #15, when he turned and looked at us (and Zukala) and said simply: "Farewell."

Gary Fishman, 134 Carol Drive Rochester, N.Y. 14617

I told a friend of mine that Barry Smith might leave CONAN, and he said: "Good!" I asked him, "Why good?" And he said: "Because now I won't have to buy CONAN any more!"

Think about it.

Lawrence Shapiro, 2001 Bowers Santa Clara, Calif. 95051

You must keep Barry working on CONAN — even if you have to bribe him!

Jeannie Lee (Address Not Given)



Okay, people — so now the Bashful One is back in earnest, after a couple of artfully-pencilled fill-in issues by Gil Kane. Only thing is, due to the truly fearsome amount of time and work which Barry poured into this, his initial return-effort on CONAN, plus a few other time-factors, inker Dan Adkins was able to finish off only the first half of this issue — and the latter portion is therefore being reproduced from Barry's pencils, so that Dan can get a head jump on the next tale. Hope you get a kick out of seeing just how those finished pencildrawings of Barry's look in the flesh. Let us know, huh?

Also, this issue marks something radically new in the CONAN comic for both Barry and Roy. Beginning this go-round, they've begun a several-issue epic which they hope will eventually match the scope of Robert E. Howard's own "The Hour of the Dragon" (published in paperback as Conan the Conqueror), the one and only novel which REH ever wrote — and which was, itself, serialized in five parts in Weird Tales magazine in the late 1930's. No, there'll be no real cliff-hanger endings — just a strong plot-thread running thru the next several issues as Turanian hordes face the defenders of Makkalet — with the stalwart Cimmerian towering over all!

But, when it's all said and done, the lads are hoping you'll say that this, perhaps, was Conan's finest hour! 'Nuff said?

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

- R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel mags a month.
- T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner.
- Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.
- K.O.F.
- (Keeper Of the Flame) One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.
- P.M.M. (Permanent Marvelite Maximus) Anyone pos-
- F.F.F. (Fearless Front-Facer) An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty.



BARBARO O RESCALDO DA BATALHA O MOMENTO DE RETORNAR TEMPORARIAMENTE ÀS EMBARCAGÕES COM PROAS DE DRAGÃO QUE OSCILAM NAS ÁGUAS DIANTE DA SITIADA MAKKALET. UM BREVE DESCANSO, DURANTE O QUAL SURSIRÃO OS PRIMEIROS RELATOS OFEGANTES DE PROE-ZAS QUE SE TORNARÃO LENDAS... UMA PAUSA PARA LIMPAR ESPADAS ENCRUSTRADAS DE SANGUE... STAN LEE = ROY THOMAS BARRY SMITH E PARA CUIDAR DAS PERIDAS QUE AFLIGEM TANTOS CORPOS. DAN ADKINS ARTE-FINAL

História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 20 (novembro/1972)

CONTINUANDO AS AVENTURAS PO HERÓI CRIADO POR ROBERT E. HOWARDI













































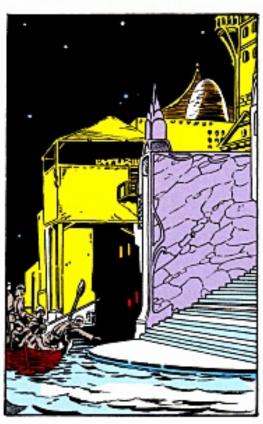




































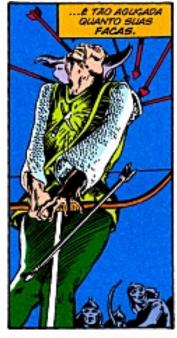






























































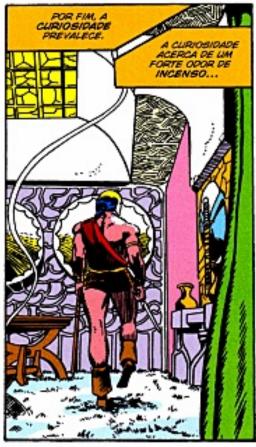
















































































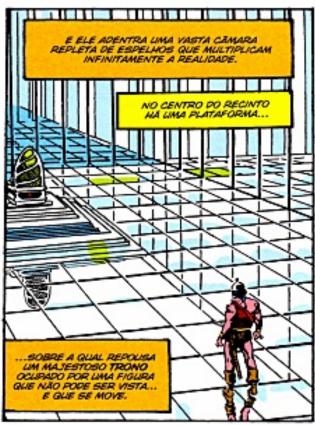


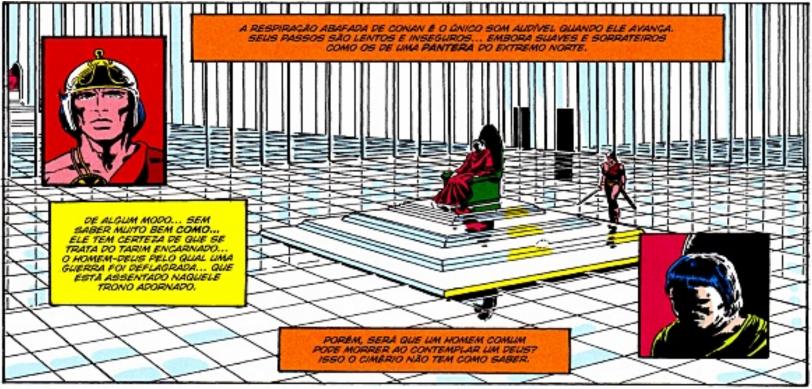


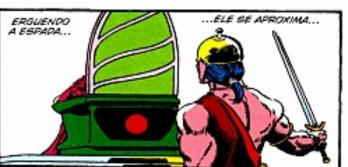






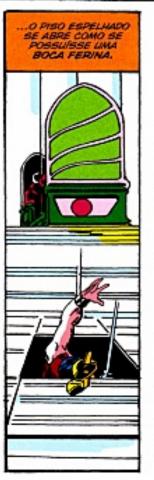
























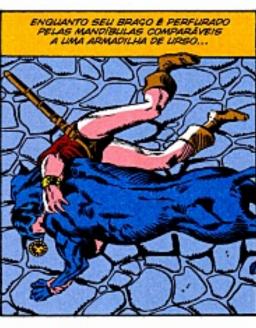










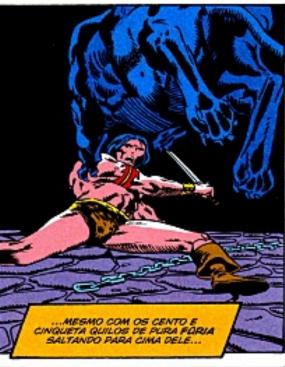






































APÓS LONGOS MINLITOS SEM QUE NADA SE MOVA NAS TREVAS SUSTERRÂNEAS...



COM LIM DESCOMUNAL ESFORGO QUE IMPÕE DORES LANCINANTES A CADA MOVIMENTO, CONAN **RASTEJA**, CENTÍMETRO POR CENTÍMETRO, ELE VAI AFASTANDO SEU TORTURADO CORPO DA FERA ABATIDA... E AVANÇANDO NA DIREÇÃO DE LIM MURMORIO QUE PARECIA TÃO DISTANTE, MAS AGORA LATEJA ESTRONDOSO EM SUA MENTE FEBRIL.







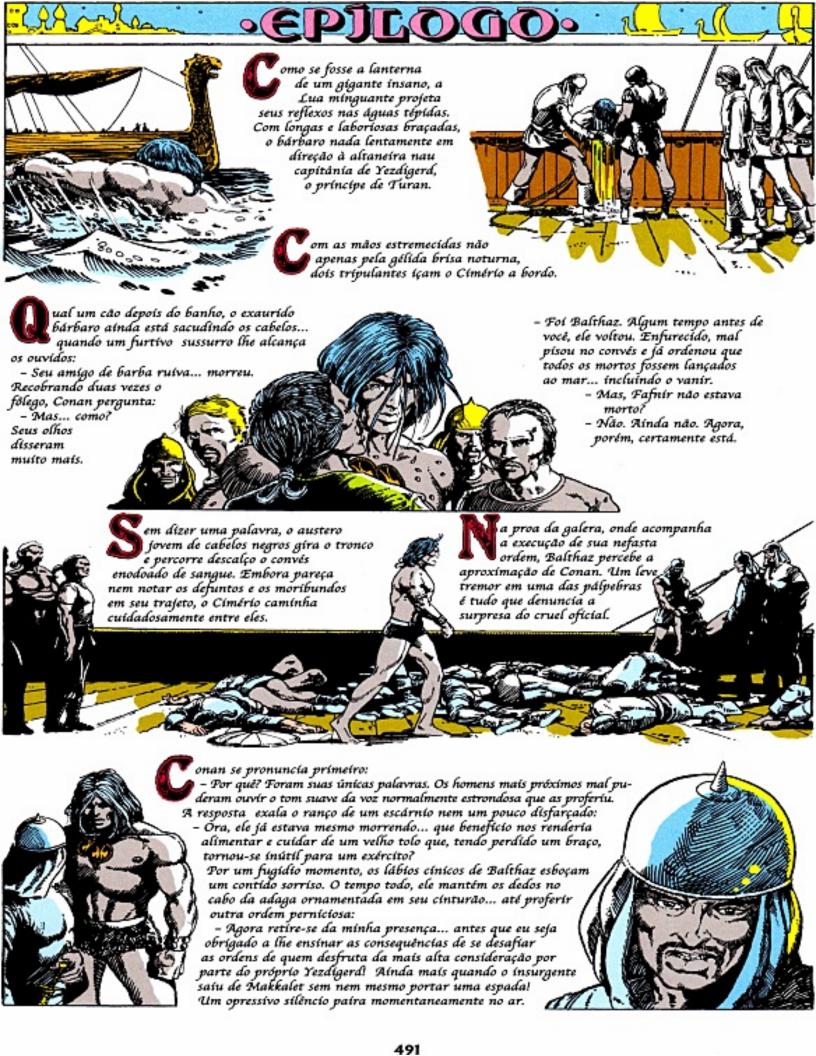


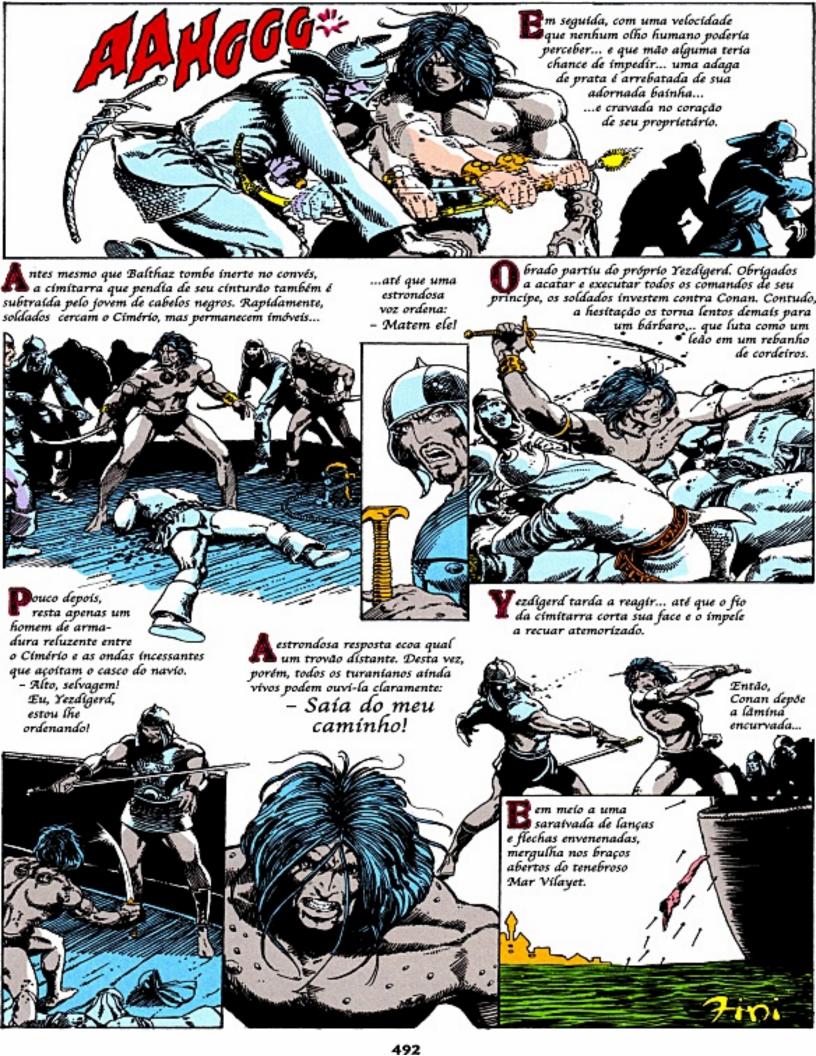
ATÈ QUE, FINALMENTE, ELE LEVANTA O ROSTO PERANTE UMA ASER-TURA QUE SE ABRE À SUA FRENTE...











COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

SPECIAL BARBARIAN BULLETIN: Due to the number of brand-new titles and features we've been tossing at you of late, we've had no room on our regular Bullpen Page to print the results of the 1971 Shazam awards - those coveted lightning-shaped statuettes given out by the comix industry itself to those among it who it feels have contributed creatively to the graphic-story form during the previous year.

Thus, instead of the expected comments on the "Frost Giant's Daughter" reprint in CONAN #16, we'll delay those (plus comments on Gil Kane's phantasmagorical fill-in issues) till next time and fill you in on the

winners here and now, before it's time for the '72 ceremony! Here goes....

ITEM! We said we'd give it to you straight - and here it is! On May 30 just past, the famous Academy of Comic Book Arts held its second annual 1971 Awards Dinner, at which were presented its shiny and prestigious Shazam awards. We don't know about our Distinguished Competitors, but we've sworn to print a full list of the winners each and every year, so here goes - with a bit of appropriate commentary here and there:

First off, the Best Continuing Feature award went to Marvel's own CONAN THE BARBARIAN - a fitting tribute to the hard work which goes into each and every issue of that most unique magazine. Best Individual Story award went to "Snowbirds Don't Fly" in GREEN LANTERN #85.

In the Dramatic division, NEAL ADAMS was named best penciler (which makes us all the more eager to see the artwork on that new series he's working on for Marvel), DICK GIORDANO best inker - both repeats. While Marvel's own ROY THOMAS was tapped for best on CONAN and THE AVENGERS. (Yep, there's a Humorous division, too - with JOHN ALBANO named best writer, Archie-illustrator DAN DECARLO best penciler, and HENRY SCARPELLI best inker. And you can see handsome Hank's work on display in the latest issue of HARVEY, if you like.)

Best Letterer award went to GASPAR SALADINO - not a familiar name to most Marvel boosters, but still the guy who's designed most of our far-out new logos over the past year. And TATJANA WOOD was named Best Colorist.

There were a few other awards, too. WILL EISNER, creator of the Spirit, was elected as the 1971 entry to ACBA's Hall of Fame; JACK KIRBY won an award for Special Achievement by an Individual; Britisher FRANK BELLAMY (who draws the English version of "Star Trek" for a weekly magazine there) was named best Foreign Artist; while MIKE KALUTA and underground comix artist RICHARD CORBEN tied for the New Talent kudos.

Oh yes - and Marvel madman GIL

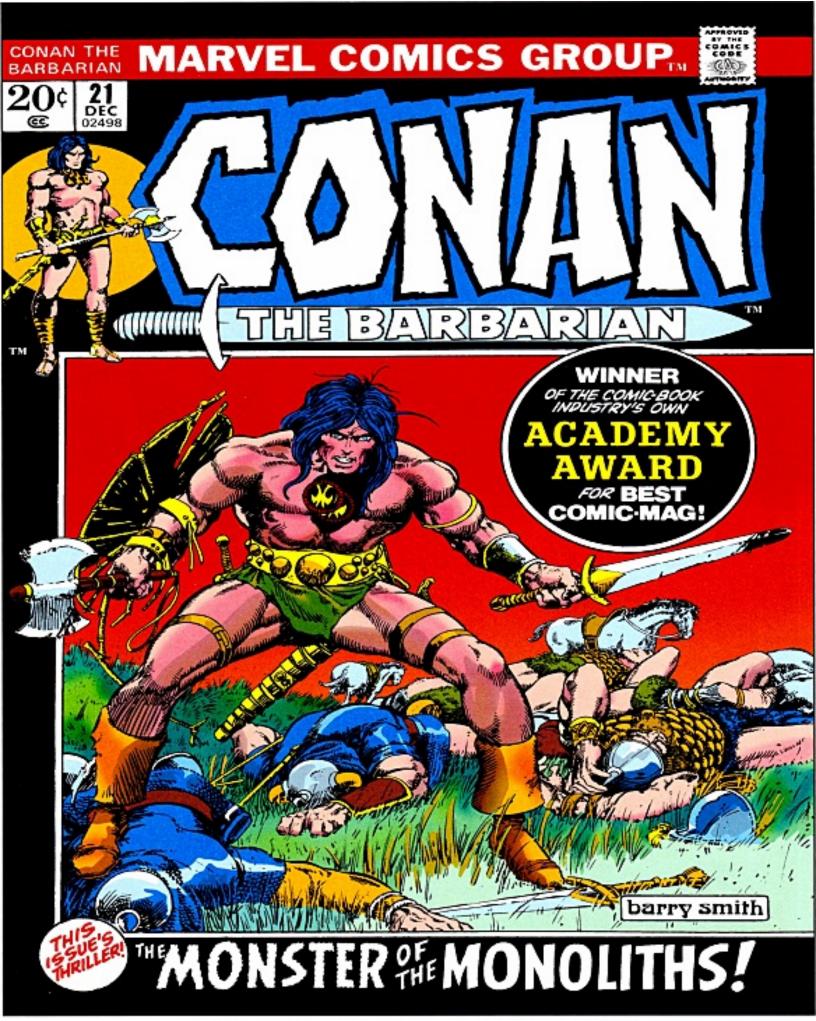
for his paperback comix-novel Blackmark!

Well, that's it for this time around, people! See you next year for ACBA see you next paragraph for Marvell . . .



And, just because we feel we SHOULD every issue or so, here's Robert E. Howard's own MAP of the Hyborian world - with the besieged city of MAK-KALET discreetly added for your edifi-





Stan Lee APRESENTA:

ROY THOMAS ROTEIRO

BARRY SMITH LUSTRAÇÕES 6

ARTE-PINAL

DAN CRAIG VAL SAL ADKINS & RUSSELL & MAYERIK & BUSCEMA

NO CONTO "A PEDRA NEGRA", DE ROBERT E. HOWARD, O CRIADOR DE CONAN.

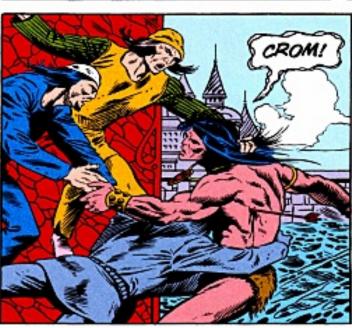


História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 21 (dezembro/1972)























.. QUE OUTRO CADÁVER

AINDA BEM. PODEM ME TRA-ZER O BÁRBARO...

COM CUIDADO.

EU DISSE *COM CUIDADO*, MENTECAPTOS!





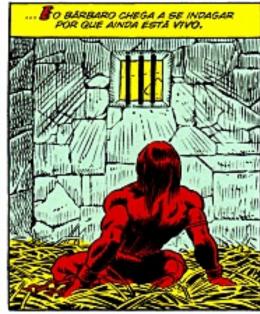


















































QUAL, PARA O CIMERIO,













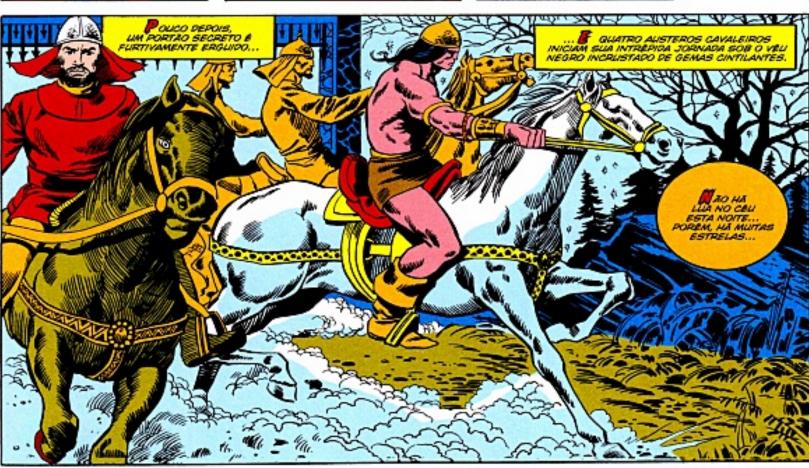
























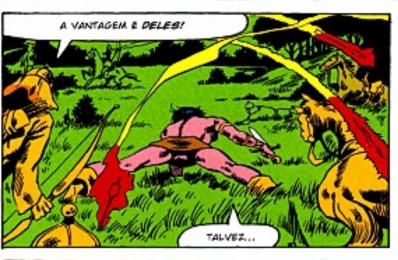








































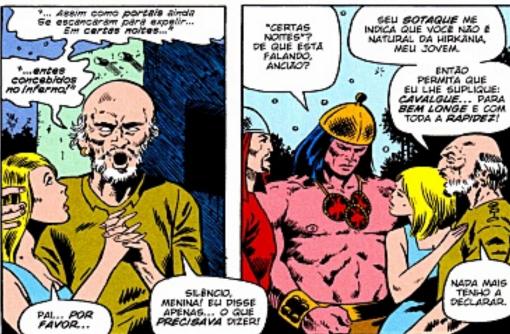
















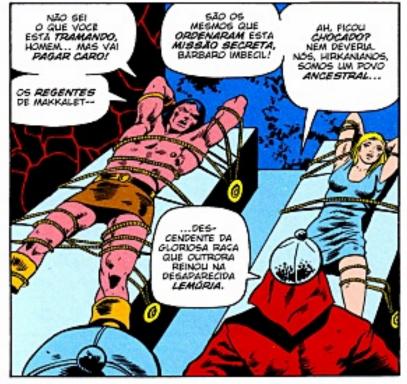






















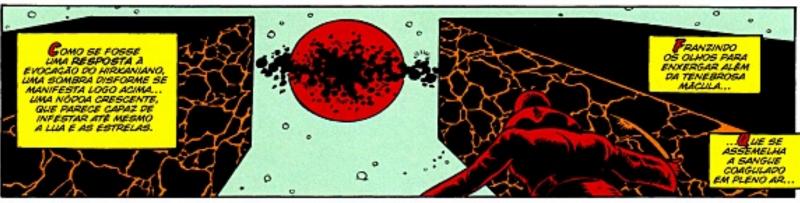




































LANÇANDO OLHARES PRENÉTICOS EM TODAS AS DIREÇÕES, O BÂRBARO SE APERCEBE DOS ARBUSTOS QUE PODERIAM OCULTA-LO DE SEU PREDADOR.























































ARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 1002Z

As the most myopic fortune-teller could have predicted, the substitution of Gil Kane - or any artist, for that matter - for Barry Smith on CONAN was bound to bring in a deluge of letters, pro and con! And so, in keeping with Marvel's new policy (or didja notice?) of trying to include more letters and parts of letters in its fan-section, we thought we'd offer up these tantalizing tidbits without individual comment, saving our own

Congratulations on CONAN THE BARBARIAN #17! When I heard Barry was leaving the strip, I hoped Gil Kane would be the replacement, because of the raw savagery he can portray. Many there are who will compare Gil's and Barry's artwork. It's futile.... It might be argued that Gil's circular-type anatomy and "astonished-look" faces don't fit CONAN, but he produced a masterpiece in storytelling, layouts, and visual excitement. Ralph Reese did a remarkable job in inking Gil's work with heavier lines and darker shadows, thus en-hancing Gil's pencils tremendously. (While Roy, as usual, produced another first-rate script! Also, that cover!!! Gil Kane, aided by the very, very talented Frank Brunner, produced one heckuva drawing! Applause again!)

Dean Mullaney, 81 Delaware St. Staten Island, N.Y. 10304

I have just picked up CONAN #17 and I've got to say that I am truly disappointed. Gil did hold his own as an artist, but he just didn't capture the real Conan that we're all used to. Gil is good at drawing superheroes and such like, but Conan is not his thing. Barry captures the Conan I read about in the paperbacks.

James Edward Smith (address not given)

Your issue #17 was brilliant! I'm glad to see you're back to adapting Howard stories . . . also glad you're not limiting stories to ones originally about Conan. Try to keep Roy scripting Conan; he's the best author you've got, and is almost as good as L. Sprague deCamp when it comes to rewriting Howard's originals. Gil did the best art he's ever done; he draws Conan's muscles the way Frazetta did on the cover of Conan of Cimmeria. RFO, TTB, QNS, KOF Scott Olson

4623 Browndale, Edina, Minn. 55424

it's been over a month now, and I still can't stop raving about how bee-yoo-ti-ful the art on CONAN #17 was! From what I had seen in the past of Gil's and Ralph's styles, I was a bit apprehensive about the whole thing. But was I ever wrong! I've never liked anyone's inking of Gil's pencils as much as I do Ralph's! I can hardly wait to see Reese's solo job on the upcoming strip featuring Howard's other hero, Solomon Kane! (Of course, I hardly expect this letter to get printed, cause I've been sending them on a steady basis now for seven years, and I know I don't stand a chance against Matt Graham, Paty, Shirley Gorman, and your other regulars, I just couldn't keep my pro-Kane, pro-Reese comments to myself any longer.)

Duffy Vohland, P.O. Box 70 Clarksburg, Ind. 47225

Let me make one thing perfectly clear: Never, never let Gil Kane pencil CONAN again! His style just isn't 'barbaric' enough. (But don't feel completely bad, Gil, 'cuz you still draw a fine female - note Kyrie in CONAN #17!)

RFO, KOF, Gary Oppenhuis, 2205 Thornton Rd. Lansing, III, 60438

When I heard the ill-fated announcement that Gil Kane would be taking over the helm of CONAN's art, I nearly cried. True, Mr. Thomas, everyone knows Gil Kane does the excellent WARLOCK and many of Marvel's most dynamic covers, but it never seemed to me that

Kane was CONAN material. I was proven wrong!

David Randolph III (no address given)

In my opinion, if Barry Smith doesn't draw CONAN, you might as well cancel the mag. Gil Kane, Neal Adams, even Jack Kirby couldn't do Conan properly. Barry Smith's style was perfect for Conan and he did justice to Robert E. Howard's stories. It was almost as if they had worked together on the comic!

One angry customer — John Kozak, 477 Kimberly Ave. Winnipeg 15, Manitoba, Canada

Barry Smith is all right, but he is not my cup of tea. Gil Kane and Ralph Reese in issue #17 were fantastic. It would been even better if 60% of the dialogue had been eradicated. No matter what artist you put on the strip, and how you handle the story, give the story more room to breathe!

Gary L. Robinson, 1409 Waco St. Troy, Ohio 45373

Dear Robert E. Thomas and Gil Howard:

CONAN #17 was beautiful! Praise to Roy and Gil, although I did miss Barry. Featuring Conan in place of Turlogh O'Brien in "The Gods of Bal-Sagoth" was rather relieving and in very good taste. But wasn't the original name of that story "The Blonde Goddess of Bal-Sagoth"? Which is right? Or are they both titles for the same story? Or was the title changed years later? Or am I really typing this letter? Or did you really put out an issue #17? Or am I dreaming it all? (Judy, please wake me up after I write my signature. ZZZzzzzzzz.)

Danny G. Daniels, 1128 S. Gay Ave., #18 Panama City, Fla. 32401

Hyborian bon mots for the end. Like so....

To answer Danny Daniels' somewhat somnambulent

question first:

If our information is correct (and we think it is), the story on which issues #17-18 of CONAN were based was originally titled "The Gods of Bal-Sagoth" appeared in Weird Tales magazine for October 1931. It was the Second Avon Fantasy Reader some years later which retitled it as you suggest; later, the Dark Man volume of REH stories restored the original title. Roy and Gil not only kept the original title (mainly because the previous two issues had also contained female references in the title, to a "Frost Giant's Daughter" and a "Green Empress") — they even changed her hair color from blonde to scarlet! As the Rascally One's buddies at the National Lampoon would say — "Is nothing sacred?"

Of more pith and moment: The basic consensus of barbarian-lovers the world over seems to be that Gil Kane did a fabulous fill-in job for our award-winning young Britisher, but they've come to identify Conan with Barry Smith every bit as much as with Frank Fraz-etta — and they're glad we're bringing back a winning

combination! So be it!

A closing note: The hardest task around Marvel these days seems to be to get a CONAN issue penciled and inked in time to meet our ever-maddening deadlines! This time around, Barry tried to gain a slight lead on next month's saga by doing merely rough sketches for most pages, and the finished art was done over them by new pencilers Val Mayerik and Craig Russell (who work with Dan Adkins out in the wilds of Ohio), with inking by the amazing Mr. Adkins himself and our pal Sal Buscema. Sheesh! Next time CONAN is nominated for a Shazam award, it looks like they'll need a long-winded M.C. just to read off all the art credits on the mag!

(And, in closing - Messrs, Adkins and Mayerik will be teaming up on a brand new sword-and-sorcery feature which'll be coming your way in the next couple of months -- as well as an eight-page s&s tale in one of our forthcoming mystery mags! Looks like the Robert E. Howard kind of heroic fantasy is here to stay in the comix, even though it's stone-cold dead on the paperback market! Now who was it said that mighty Marvel wasn't leading the pack in finding new and different fields for comic mags to conquer? Not anybody who reads CONAN, Charlie!)



HYBORIAN PAGE

(SEE OUR LETTERS PAGE FOR THE STORY BEHIND THIS ONCE-IN-A LIFETIME WONDER--WHICH COMES DIRECT FROM BARRY (THE BARBARIAN) SMITH TO CONAN-BOOSTERS THE WORLD OVER!



THE HYBORIAN PAGE

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

Well, it finally happened!

As we've been telling you for months, it's been a terrific strain for Roy, Barry, and our hard-pressed, hardworking inkers to turn out an issue of CONAN THE
BARBARIAN each and every month. Time after time,
the ever-demanding deadline has forced them to take
desperate measures — including one issue reproduced
partly from pencils, another finished up from Barry's
layouts by no less than four penciler/inkers.

But this time, Fate as well went against them - and

you.

At the last minute — and believe it when we say we mean just that! — no less than thirteen pages of the 21-page spectacular planned for this issue went lost in the mail, necessitating either a reprint of an earlier CONAN issue — or the substitution of a few "Conanpresented" sword-and-sorcery tales gathered from earlier Marvel mags. There wasn't even time to change the now-accidentally-misleading cover, since it was printed long before the loss could have been anticipated. (And please, people — don't tell us we should simply have skipped putting out an issue at all this month. Nothing would have pleased Roy and Barry more — but, once printing schedules are definitely set up, that becomes impossible. By legal contract, Marvel had to put out something called CONAN THE BARBARIAN this month — even if the mag had been completely filled with reruns of Millie the Model! No lie!)

Anyway, faced with this dilemma, we decided to make the best of a bad deal by doing what hundreds of readers have begged us to do anyway, over the past couple of years: We've re-presented that first, epochmaking issue of CONAN — the star-crossed saga which started this award-winning title on its wandering way to greatness, and which in turn helped to launch a whole new passle of comics titles (including, one way or another, KULL THE CONQUEROR, the upcoming THONGOR OF LOST LEMURIA and even WAR OF THE WORLDS, the current adaptations in our macabre mystery mags, DOC SAVAGE — and a couple of projects by our Distinguished Competition, as well). Nor is the end in sight.

And, since we're not really trying to rip-off you CONAN completists out there, we thought we'd reproduce (for the first time anywhere!) a landmark pin-up as well — a full-page phantasmagoria of a barbarian hero penciled and inked by Barry two or three years back, as a warm-up for the CONAN mag. We hope it'll ease the blow just a bit to those of you who picked up this ish on the basis of the cover — and then discovered you already possess a copy of the story inside (for which entrepreneuring comics dealers are already asking and getting!) as much as \$5 per copy!

And, don't worry — we're already hard at work (with the aid of some xeroxed layouts we had lying around) on filling in those missing unlucky-13 pages, so that next issue — with a new cover, natch! — you can finally behold "The Shadow of the Vulture" lying heavy over

the Hyborian Age!

There! We hope we explained averything as painlessly as possible — and we'll reiterate that we're taking steps to see that it never happens again! It was nobody's fault — not Barry's, not Roy's, not scheduled inker Dan Adkins', not even mixed-up Marvel's, for a change — just a freak of Nature and the sorely-confused U.S. Post Office. And those are two awesome entities, friend, that not even a Cimmerian swordsman could take on single-handed!







KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (Real Frantic One)—A buyer of at least 3 Marvel mags a month.

T.T.B. (Titanic True Believer) - A divinely-inspired

Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate frantic one who's had a letter printed.

K.O.F.

F.F.F.

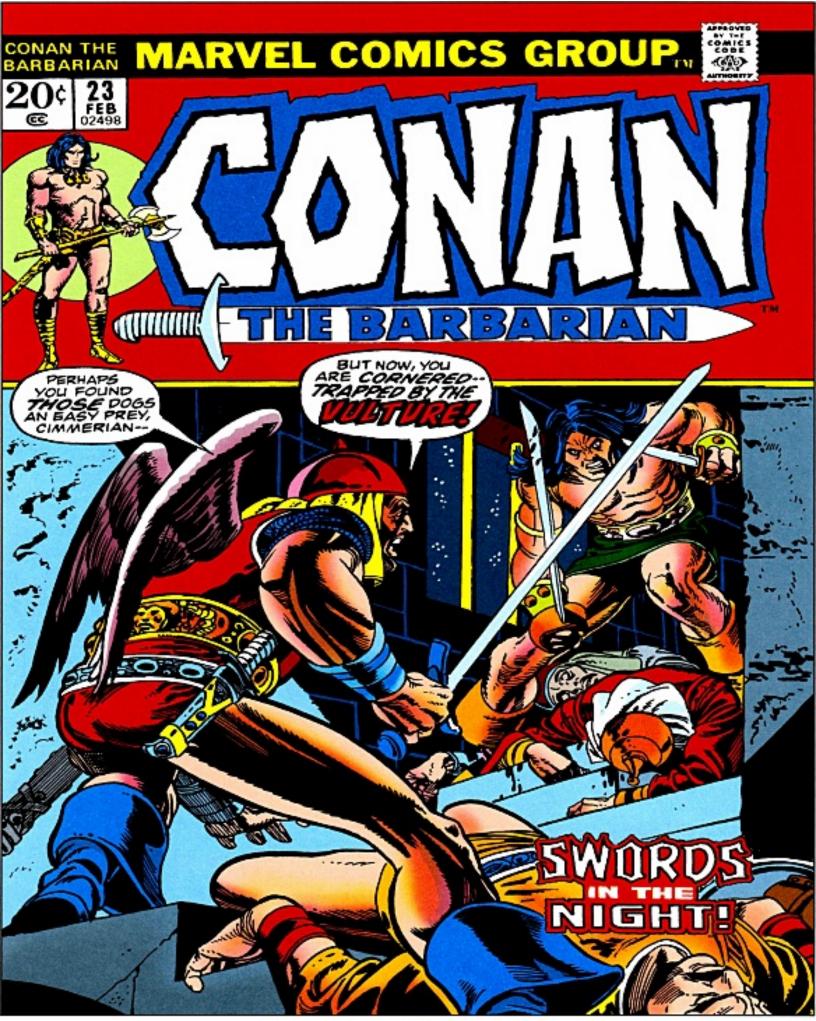
(Keeper Of the Flame) - One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks

(Permanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone possessing all four of the other titles.

(Fearless Front-Facer) — An honorary title bestowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond the call of duty.

REPRODUÇÃO DA SEÇÃO DE CARTAS PUBLICADA EM **CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 22**, EXPLICANDO QUE, POR CONTA DA CARGA DE TRABALHO E DO EXTRAVIO DE VÁRIAS PÁGINAS DESTA EDIÇÃO NO CORREIO, A EDIÇÃO 22 TEVE DE SER PREENCHIDA COM A REPUBLICAÇÃO DE CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 1.





Stan Lee

CODAD, O BARBARO

ROY THOMAS ROTEIRO . BARRY SMITH ILLISTRAÇÕES . BUSCEMA, ADKINS & STONE ARTE-FINAL



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 23 (fevereiro/1973)





















































SENTIR-SE OBRIGADO A ALLIGAR
SUA ESPADA A MONARCAS CUJAS
ESPOSAS TENTARAM MATÁ-LO.

FORA 1650,

NÃO FAZ

A MUITAS LÉGUAS DO PARADEIRO DE CONAN, UM ANEL DE FOGO... CADA VEZ MAIS ARDENTE... OCUPA TODO O ENTORNO DA CIDADE-ESTADO CHAMADA MAKKALET.



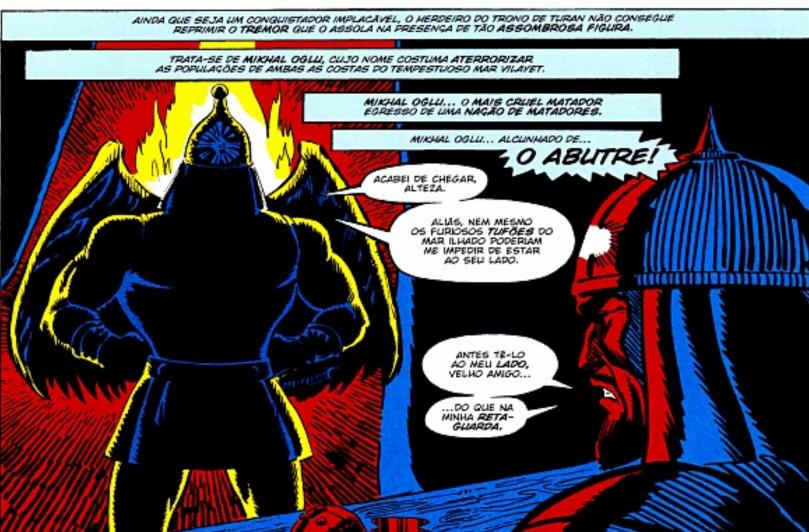
NO PAVILHÃO PRINCIPAL DO ACAMPAMENTO MILITAR, REPOLISA O AMBICIOSO PRÍNCIPE YEZPIGERD.

















































































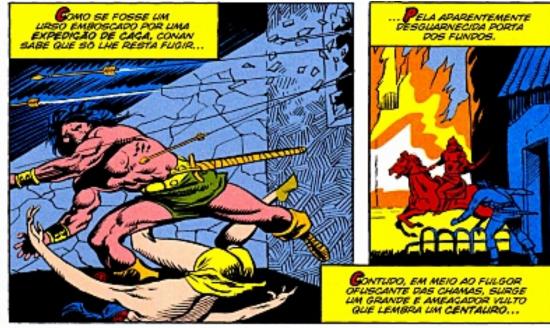
















































DO LESTE ...











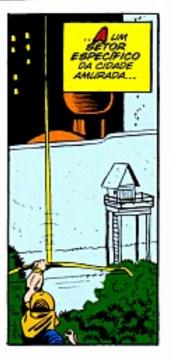


































































ANTES MESMO DE CONSEGUIR

















































TERRA DE TREVAS E DE NOITES PROFUNDAS!" **EPÍLOGO:** NO ACAMPAMENTO TURANIANO, POLICOS HOMENS PERCEBEM QUE JA ESTA ANOITECENDO. AFINAL, SEU PRÍNCIPE

EPÍLOGO: YEZDIGERO TRANSFORMOU O PRÓPRIO PAVILHÃO EM UM FULGURANTE ESPETÂCULO CAPAZ DE TORNAR AS NOITES

QUASE TÃO CLARAS QUANTO OS DIAS.











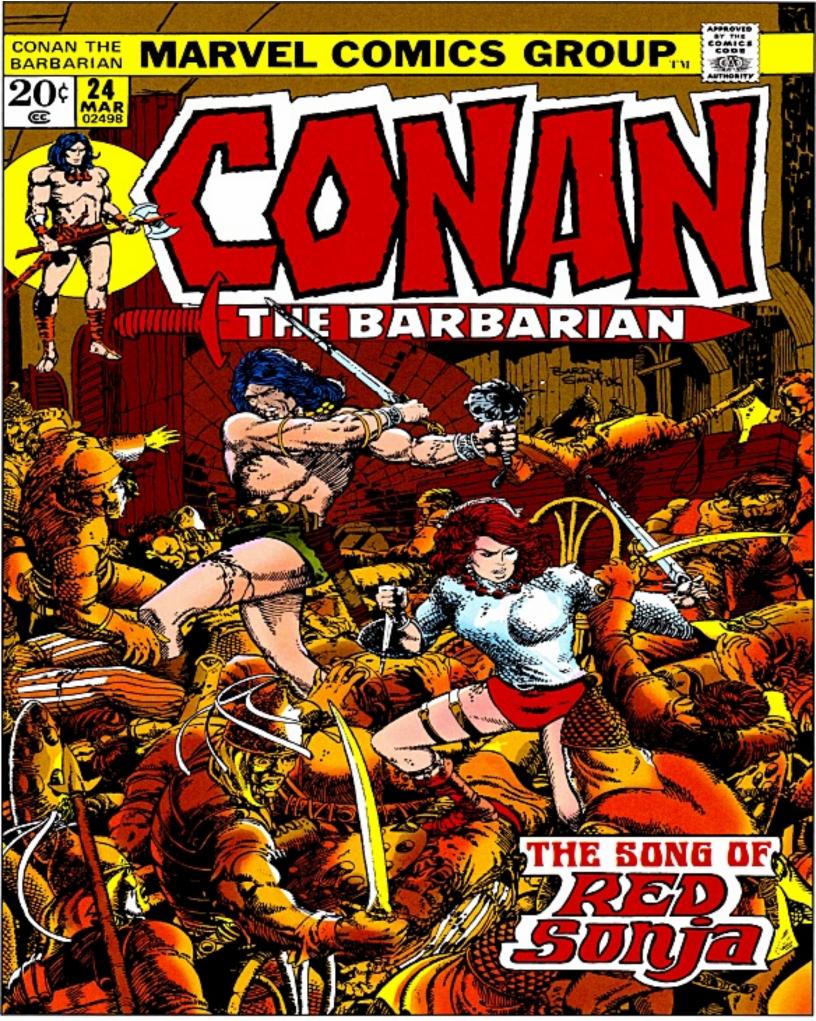














História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 24 (março/1973)

MERSA EM SUA COREOGRAFIA FRENÉTICA, QUASE COMO SE ESTIVESSE EM TRANSE, A QUERREIRA MAL ESCUTA OS GRITOS DE ACLAMAÇÃO AO SEU REDOR.

























































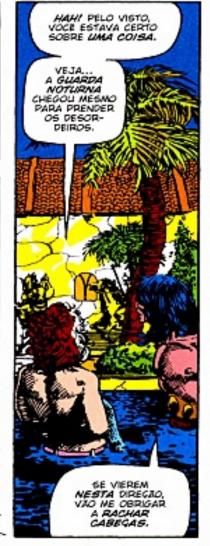






































































"INICIALMENTE, VOCÊ
DEVE FINGIR QUE É APENAS
A COMANDANTE DAS TROPAS
ENVIADAS PARA HONRAR O
TRATADO QUE, EM MOMENTOS
DE ABSOLUTA NECESSIDADE,
ME OBRIGA A REFORÇAR AS
DEFESAS DE MAKKALET."

"PORÉM, NA PRIMEIRA
OPORTUNIDADE, TRATE
DE INVADIR A TORRE
NA GUAL, DE ACORDO
COM MEUS INFORMANTES,
FOI ARMAZENADO O DOTE
DA MINHA FILHA."



"LÁ, DECERTO VOCÊ ENCON-TRARÁ UMA CERTA TIARA EM PORMA DE SERPENTE QUE, EM UM TOLO MOMENTO DE GENEROSIDADE EXA-CERBADA, EU COMETI O EQUIVOCO DE INCLUIR."



EMBORA SE RECORDE CLARAMENTE PESSAS INSTRUÇÕES, GONJA GABE QUE HAVIA ... ALGO MAIS.



MA LEMBRANÇA QUE, SEGURAMENTE, SUA MEMORIA SÓ LEVARIA PARA RESGATAR...



AS, NAQUELE INSTANTE, ELA SE DEPARA COM O ESPLENDOROSO ADORNO QUE PROCURA.



A 5 GEMAS INCRUSTADAS NOS OLHOS DO DIADEMA OSTENTAM LIM SINISTRO BRILHO...



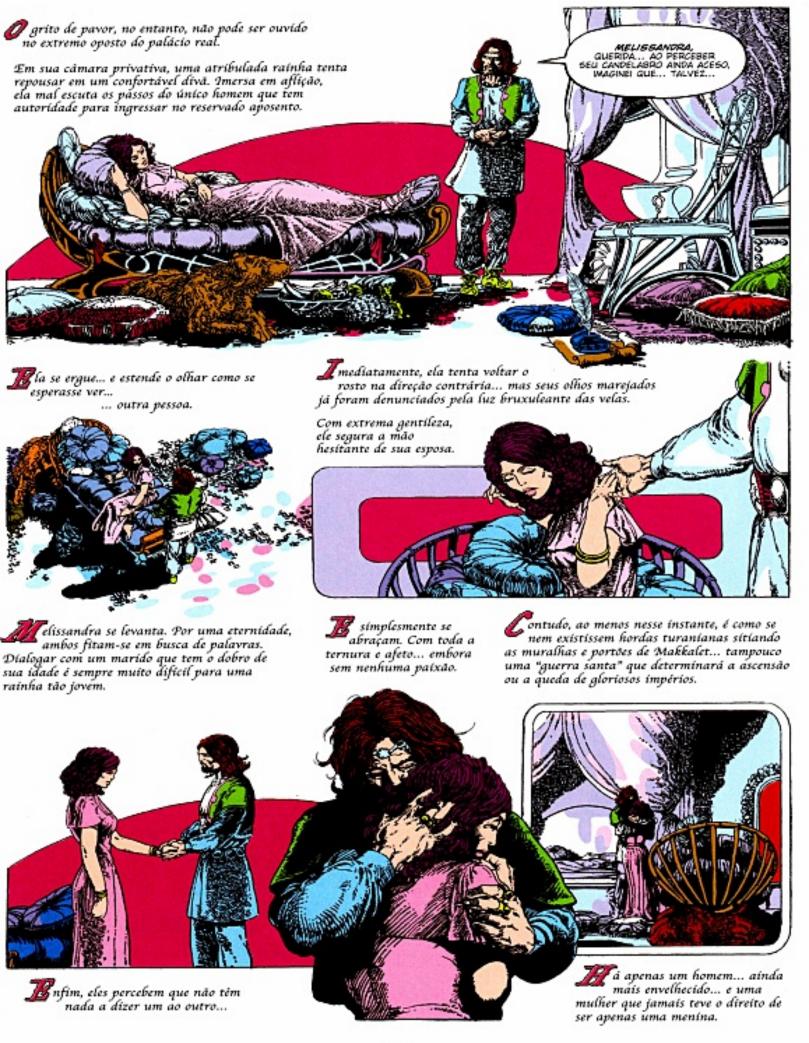
E ELA ACABA SE ESQUECENDO DO QUE MAIS O REI GHANNIF DISSE.

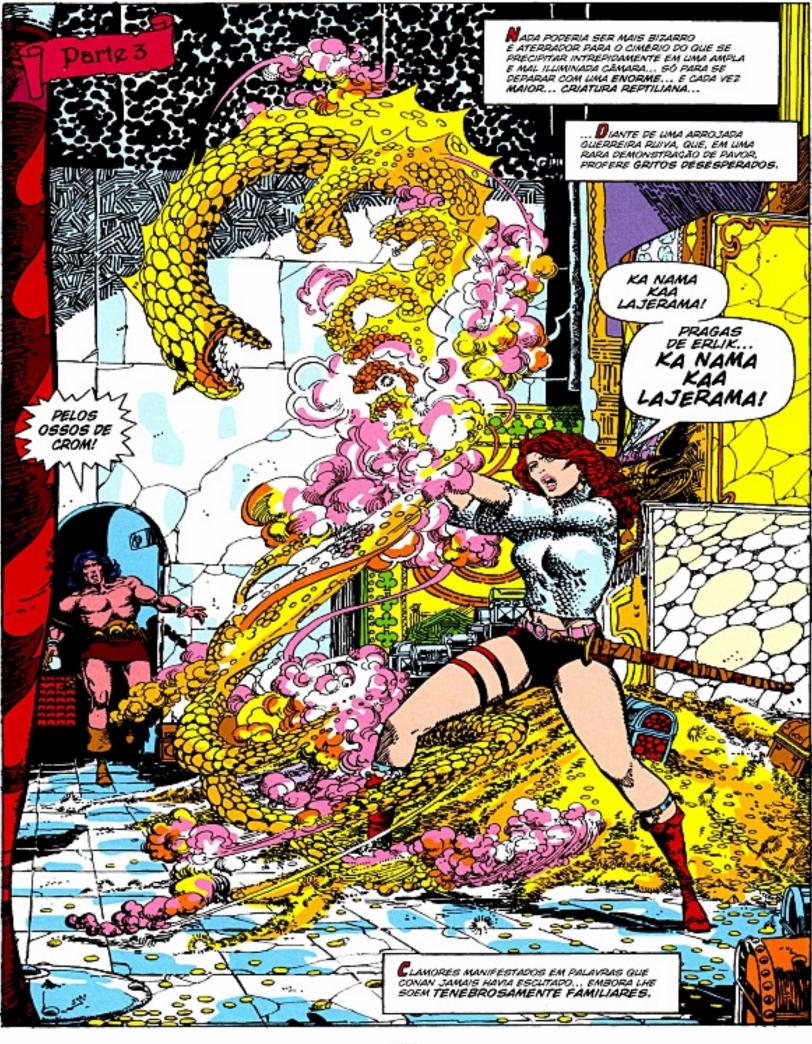
EMPLINHANDO A TIARA COM TODA A FORGA DE SHAS JOVENS MAOS... INICIA UMA APRESSADA FUGA.

POR ALGUM MOTIVO INEXPLICAVEL, BLA NEM SE IMPORTA EM GRITAR PARA ALERTAR O CIMERIO. TÃO PROXIMO, MAS PERIGOSAMENTE DISTANTE, ELE AINDA PERCORRE OS CORREDORES SINISTROS...

























DURANTE ALGUNS
INSTANTES, O DEMÔNIO
OFIDICO EMPINA-SE ACIMA DE
CONAN E SONJA, MESITANTE,
ELE OBSERVA SUAS PRESAS...
SEM SABER QUAL DELAS DEVE
SER A PRIMEIRA VITIMA
DO MORTIPERO BOTE.

















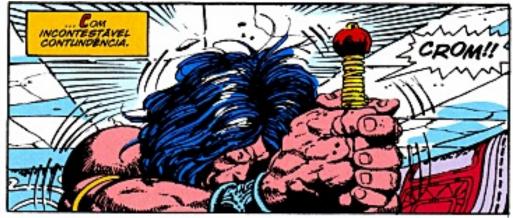






























COMO SE FOSSEM PALHA, OS PIOS DE SEDA SÃO INCENDIADOS QUASE INSTANTANEAMENTE PELO FOGO ARCANO...



... E O CIMBRIO NÃO TEM ESCOLHA, A NÃO SER LARGAR A CORDA FLAMEJANTE...



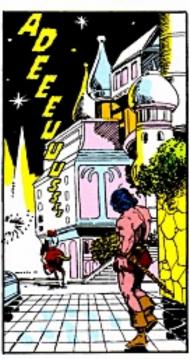




















% MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

Dear Roy, Barry, and Dan,

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #19 was truly a masterpiece in fantasy, Granted, Barry, I've heard of exiting in a blaze of glory (the Conan-Elric saga), but returning in a blaze of glory? You really topped yourself this issue.

This month's letters column contained a statement to the effect that "when it's all said and done, the lads are hoping you'll say that this, perhaps, was Conan's finest hour!" Bull! It has become quite obvious that Conan is a labor of love for both Roy and Barry (either that, or they're two of the best con-men I've ever seen). In short, as long as those two are working on CONAN, Conan's greatest hour will always be his next one!

Lon Wolve (Address Withheld)

And we're hoping that you still feel that way, Lonand the rest of the Hyborian hordes - when we announce for a second time that artist Barry Smith is leaving the strip, for personal reasons, as of this issue. In fact, that's the reason why he knocked himself out doing not only pencils but also inking and coloring on "The Song of Red Sonja," which he and Roy consider (along with "The Black Hound of Vengeance") as one of their best co-efforts since Barry started drawing CONAN again with #19.

But fear not - for the combined efforts in recent months of Roy, Barry, and fill-in artist Gil Kane have boosted CONAN solidly into the front ranks of Marvel's most popular titles — and comicdom's favorite fun-mag is hardly in danger of vanishing 'neath the waves a la Atlantis. Roy and Barry had already long since plotted the final two chapters of what they refer to as their "Hyrkanian War" epic — and, next issue, a fella name of Big John Buscema will be taking over as permanent (we hope and trust!) penciler, aided and abetted by his talented sibling Sal! Be here, huh?

As for our bashful Britisher: He's back in London on a two-month leave of absence right now, where he inked most of this final tale - and he and Roy are already planning a special feature or two for mighty Marvel, including perhaps an entire issue now and then of a mag like SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS! What're they planning? When will it appear? Watch this space, sahib -both for bashful Barry's future plans, and for the dramatic debut of the Brothers Buscema, just a few short weeks from now!

End of monumental message.

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

I have mixed emotions about your several-issue epic,

so first of all I'll unload the bad part:

I disagree fully with your having Yezdigerd and Conan meet so early in Conan's life. I think it in no way helped to strengthen the plot. True, Conan served as a mercenary in and for Turan, but it was a good many years afterward, when he himself was a king, that Conan met and slew Yezdigerd, I think Conan and Yezdigerd should have gone their own ways till that fateful day twenty years later.

Aside from all that, I'm really enjoying your first ex-

tended epic, and I hope to see more of this sort in the future. Like, perhaps, a several-issue saga of Conan raiding the southern coasts, with Belit and the Black Corsairs, as Amra the Lion.

R. Benitz, 1353 Klauber Ave. San Diego, Calif. 92114

Ordinarily, Keith, we can't serve as a bulletin board for CONAN fans trying to locate back issues. After all, the various fanzines which advertise elsewhere in our mags take care of that end of things pretty well. Howsomever, Roy and Barry were so star-struck to learn that any copies of CONAN ever reached Tasmania that they decided to make an exception, just this once, and see if anybody can help you out. Come on, people — prove that Marvelites are "The Comic Fans with a Heart''! 'Nuff said?

Dear Stan, Roy, and Barry,

As a sword-and-sorcery fan of ten years' standing, and a Marvel fan for even longer, I turned cartwheels when I heard my two favorite sources of sheer reading FUN were going to combine. Alas, we somehow missed out on the first two issues of CONAN Down Under (and further down than Tasmania one cannot get!). Issue #3, "The Grim Grey God," was everything I'd hoped for and "The Tower of the Elephant" continued the good work in masterly style. Then, somehow or other, the Tasmanian news agencies missed the next two issues, and I lost track of Conan's adventures till #7, "The Lurker Within."

Enough was enough! I placed a monthly order for CONAN with my friendly local news-agent, and haven't missed an ish since. But I still miss numbers 1, 2, 5, and I know Marvel can't supply back-issues by mail, but somewhere out there in Marvel Country there must be someone with copies of these particular issues to spare. . . . Especially, I crave to know how Conan first clashed with the wizard Zukula and met the lovely, avaricious Jenna.

> Keith Taylor, Flat 11, Granville Flats 413-15 Elizabeth Street Hobart, Tasmania, Postcode 7000

Would it surprise you to know, R.B., that Roy has been planning just such a treatment of Conan and Belit almost since the series began, some two years ago? Or that he already has the next couple of years of CONAN figured out, at least in his mind - including stories by Robert E. Howard to adapt (both Conan and non-Conan), original stories he'd like to do, and even a couple of top-name s-f authors whom he (and they) would like to see do original plots for our swashbuckling Cimmerian?

No. We didn't think it would. Surprise you, that is.





KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

(Real Frantic One)-A buyer of at least 3 Marvel R.F.O. mags a month.

(Titanic True Believer) - A divinely-inspired 'No-Prize' winner. T.T.B.

(Quite 'Nuff Sayer) - A fortunate, frantic one who's had a letter printed. O.N.S.

K.O.F.

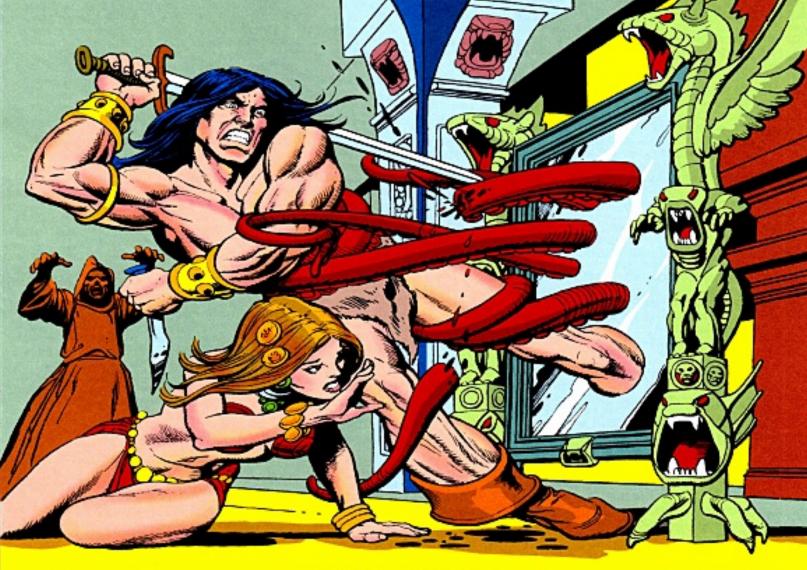
(Keeper Of the Flame) — One who recruits a newcomer to Marvel's rollickin' ranks.

P.M.M.

tPermanent Marvelite Maximus) - Anyone possessing all four of the other titles.

(Fearless Front-Facer) - An honorary title be-stowed for devotion to Marvel above and beyond F.F.F. the call of duty.

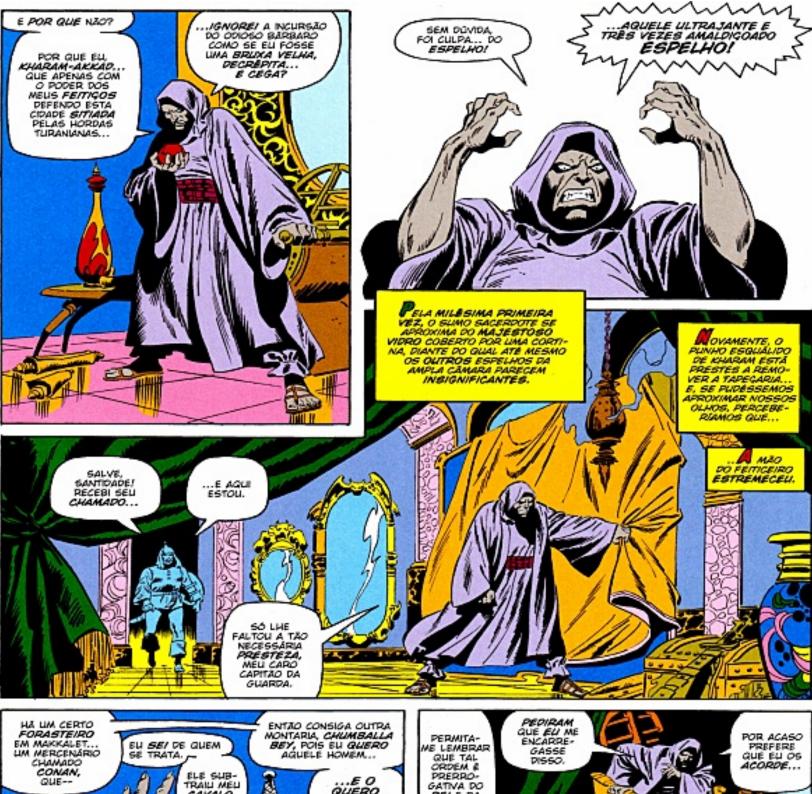




THE MURDEROUS MIRRORS OF KHARAM-AKKAD



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 25 (abril/1973)









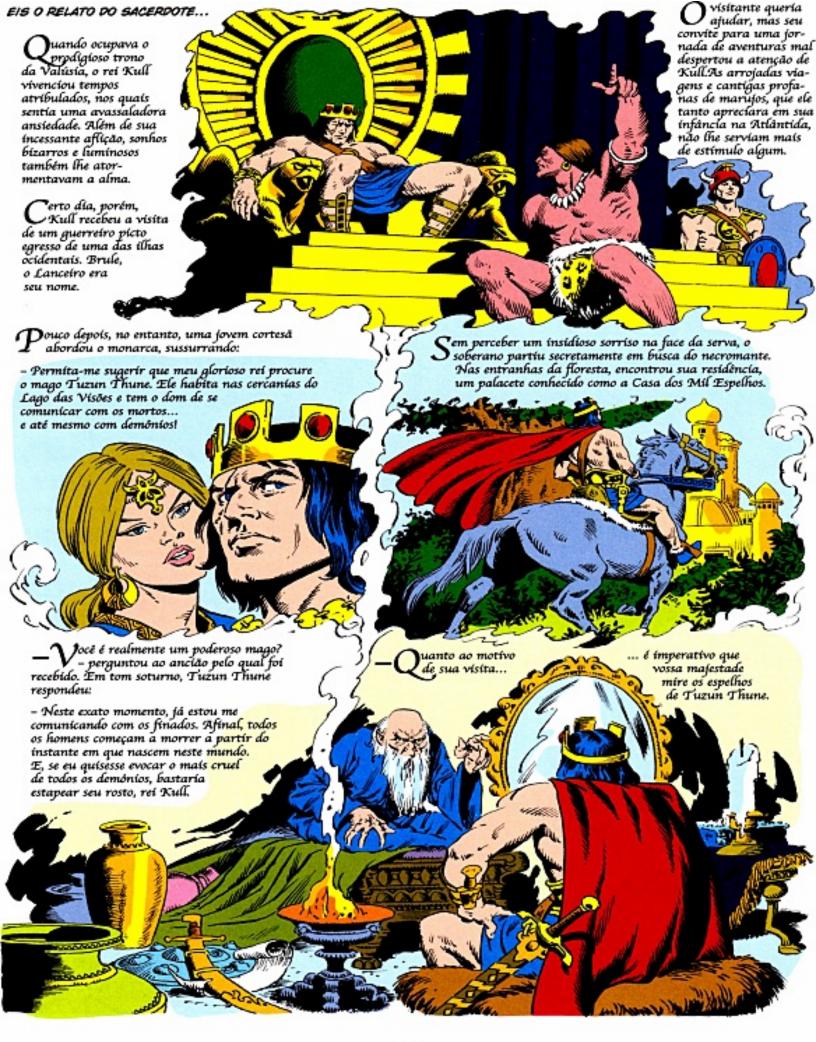


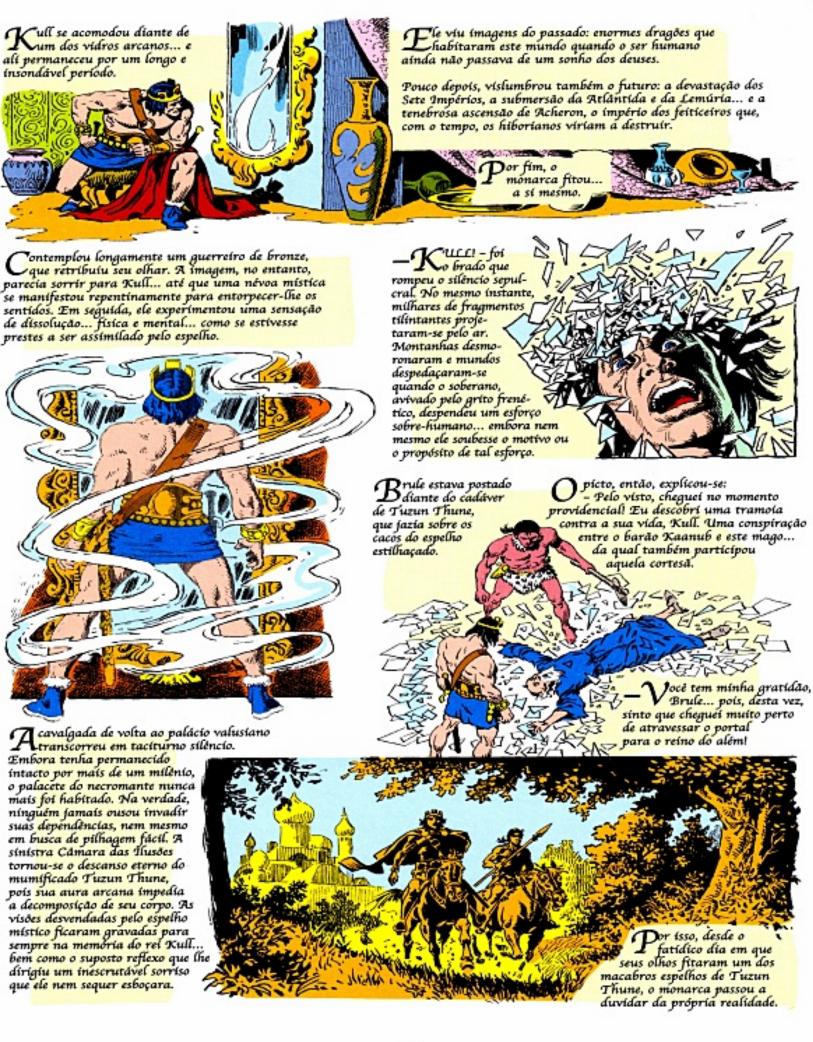


























































JOVEM RAINHA DE OLHOS TRISTES E
PALAVRAS MELÍFILIAS GUE, EM CONLUIO
COM SEU SOBERANO, ENVIOU CONAN
EM LIMA SUPOSTA MISSÃO. TRAIGOEIRAMENTE, POREM, O PROPOSITO SECRETO
DA JORNADA ERA SACRIFICÁ-LO
A UM DEMÔNIO ANURO.



BASTARIA UM GOLPE DE ESPADA... UM ÚNICO ATAQUE DESFERIDO PELO IMPLAÇÃVEL BRAÇO MOVIDO POR MOSCULOS FERREOS... PARA ABRIR CAMINHO.















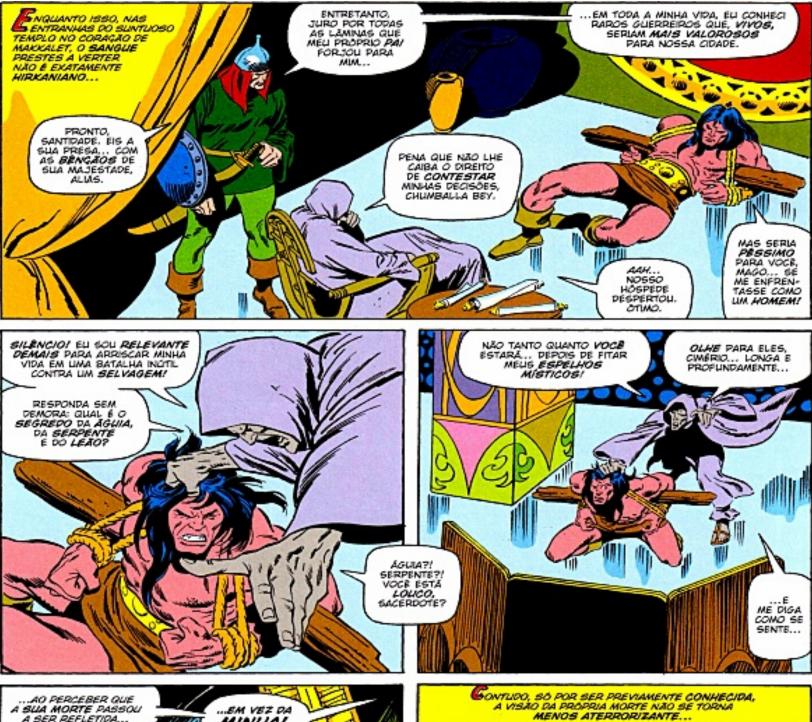
























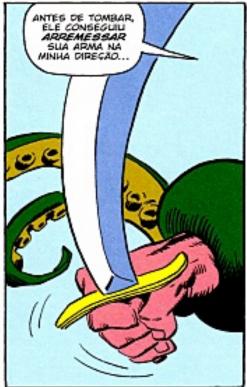










































AHARAM-AKKAD SILENCIA... SEUS OLHOS ESBUGALHAPOS, NO ENTANTO, PARECEM PROCLAMAR O HORROR E A LOUCURA QUE O ASSOLAM AO PERCEBER QUE O ESCUDO INUTILIZADO...















SPECIAL BARBARIAN BULLETIN: With this issue of CONAN, John Buscema takes over as regular penciler. As we mentioned last issue—we think—Barry Smith has decided for personal reasons that he can no longer do the strip. But he was as pleased as we were that Big John was waiting in the wings to be his replacement. And we'll be waiting with bated breath to hear your verdict on this issue's timeless tale, which was co-plotted by Roy and Barry.

Meanwhile, after a short vacation in his native London, Barry'll be back in the U.S. of A. any day now, and he and Roy have plans to team up on a number of super-special spectaculars which they kinda think you'll dig. And, while you're waiting for those surprises, do yourself a favor and pick up the latest, greatest issue yet of our companion-mag SUPER-NATURAL THRILLERS, which features an awesome adaptation by Roy, Gerry Conway, and Gil Kane of Robert E. Howard's immortal classic "The Valley of the Worm!" If you miss ityou'll never forgive yourself!

And now-because one picture is worth a thousand words-!



REPRODUÇÃO DA PÁGINA FINAL DE CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 25, ANUNCIANDO QUE JOHN BUSCEMA ASSUMIRIA A ARTE NO LUGAR DE BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH A PARTIR DA EDIÇÃO 25.



STON LEE CODRID, O BARBARO

ROY THOMAS ROTEIRO * JOHN BUSCEMA ILLISTRAÇÕES * ERNIE CHUA ARTE-FINAL * GLYNIS WEIN CORES



História originalmente publicada em CONAN THE BARBARIAN 26 (maio/1973)



































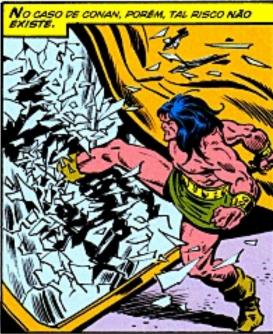
... NEM SE IMPORTA.

ELE SIMPLESMENTE SE VOLTA, LIMA VEZ MAIS, NA DIREGÃO DO ESPELHO PRATEADO... E DE SEUS LÁBIOS ESCAPA LIM INVOLUNTÁRIO



No mesmo instante, a superficie especular começa a se revolver...
prestes a exibir uma nova imagem...
On a manifestar outra mortifera ameaga.

Talvez um homem civilizado hesitasse... aguar dasse curioso para ver o que virá... e essa seria sua perdição.



















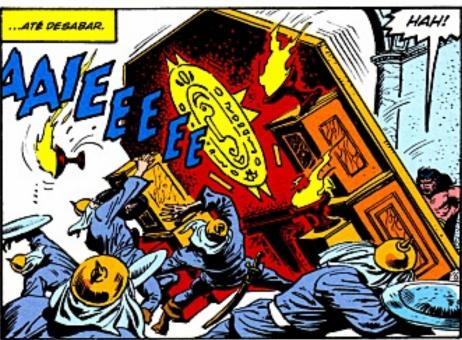




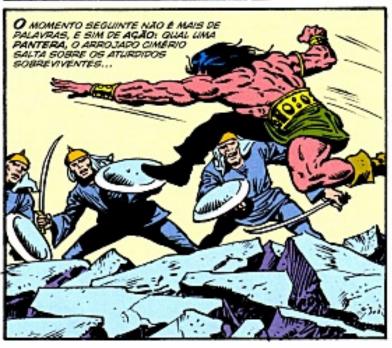












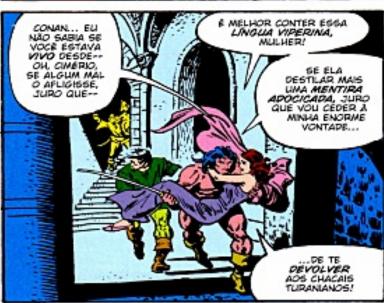






























































EM POUCO TEMPO, COMO SE FOSSE O
DESÍGNIO DE ALGUM DEUS PERVERSO,
O REI EANNATUM FICA ISOLADO JUNTO
À MURALHA... CERCAPO PELOS CADAVERES
DE SEUS GUARDIÕES... E ACUADO POR
INIMIOOS SEDENTOS



O MONARCA BATALHA COM EXTREMA BRAVURA... E UMA PEROCIDADE QUE ATÉ MESMO SUA JOVEM RAINHA ESTRANHARIA, POIS ELA SEMPRE O VIU COMO O MAIS AFÂVEL DE TODOS OS HOMENS.



POREM, AINDA QUE TENHA ABANDONADO A HABITUAL MANSIDÃO, NEM MESMO TODA SUA FORIA PODE SALVÁ-LO DO COVARDE ATAQUE PELAS COSTAS DESFERIDO POR UM LACARO ANÓNIMO.































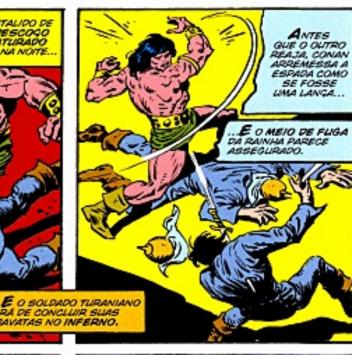














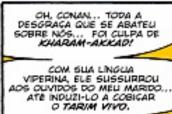






















DE IMAGINAR.















EDÍLOGO:

O SOL MATINAL FULGURA SOBRE AS EXTENSAS E SINUOSAS MURALHAS DA CIDADE AGORA DEVASTADA. EMBORA SUAS VIAS ESTEJAM INFESTADAS DE **SANGUÉ** E DE CADÂVERES RETALHADOS, TROMBETAS ANUNCIAM O INÍCIO DE UM DESFILE TRIUNFAL.



UMA PELAS É YEZDIGERD... FILHO DE YILDIZ, O REI DE TURAN... E LIM HOMEM DOTADO DE PERCÉPÇÃO É CAPACIDADE PARA FORJAR O PRÓPRIO DESTINO.



No LADO OPOSTO DA CARRILAGEM ESTÁ SULIMAR, O PRINCIPAL CONSELHEIRO REAL... QUE ANSEIA ACONSELHAR TAMBÉM OS PLITUROS MONARCAS TURANIANOS.



ENTRE OS POIS, ELEVA-SE O ASSENTO OCURADO POR UMA PERSONALIDADE... MANTIDA ERSTA POR AMARRAS CAMUFLADAS E, PORTANTO, INVISÍVEIS PARA A MULTIDAO.









E HYBORIAN. COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 1002

Because of a plethora of dynamic develop-ments, our CONAN letters page has been forced out of an issue here and there. So here, in a gargantuan effort to catch up, is a random sam-pling of barbarian bouquets and brickbats on CONAN =20-21. Since =20 ("The Black Hound of Vengeance") was one of our own personal favorites, while #21 ("The Monster of the Monoliths") went a bit awy when worked on by a few too many inkers over Barry's layouts because of deadline problems, we figured that a comparison of the letters we received on the two issues would be instructive. It was. To wit:

How does Barry Smith keep getting better and better with each issue of CONAN? I didn't think he could top =19, but =20 is incredible! The final two pages, consisting mostly of text, were very good, too.

Gary Kimbler, 139 Highview Ave. Scar., Ont. 714 Canada

The latest issues of CONAN THE BARBARIAN (=19 and =20) have to be the best achievements in comics since Marvel introduced the Fantastic Four back in 1961! Never have I seen the spirit of sword and sorcery fiction captured so expertly in a comic book!

Evan Peter Katten, 719 Kenmare Rd. Bala-Cynwyd, Pa. 19004

I enjoyed CONAN #21, but I think it would be better to have the same artist draw Conan throughout; the subtle differences nag at the back of your mind.

Cynthia Dobbs, 1704 N. Layman Ave. Indianapolis, Ind. 46218

"The Black Hound of Vengeance" was the best story in the series yet—and, with former triumphs like "The Tower of the Elephant" and Rogues in the House," that's saying a lot! As good as the art was, the story was the high point of the mag. I was really shocked to see Fafnir lying there with his arm amputated. The epilogue was the best part. Given the nature of Conan, we should come to expect death in any form, but the death of Fafnir really left a lump in my throat. Keep up the improvement, and CONAN will be a sure repeat winner in the 1973 Shazam awards. G. Dennis Gibbons, RFO, QNS, KOF

718 Somerset Rd., Saginaw, Mich. 48603

CONAN #20 was it. Words fail me.

Bruce Long, Box 2154 Whittier, Calif. 90610

CONAN deservedly won its Shazam award. But ish #21 was a real disappointment. Half the drawings (specifically at the beginning) were great, some reminiscent of Rodin in a fashion. But the rest looked like Lt. Dick Calkins imitating Lichtenstein. I suggest you let more barbarianoriented people handle your rough sketches.

Jim Warren (no address given)

Bravo, Crom, yippee--a great issue of CONAN, that #21! I was unhappy that Barry didn't do this issue completely, but I saw his influence throughout. The fill-in artists did a good job, and tried to keep Conan's face looking the way Barry does it. Bill Joyce, Olympia, Wash.

Perhaps more than any other Marvel artist, Barry Smith realizes the limits and potentials

which the comic page is capable of reaching: and, more than any other Marvel artist, he reaches and expands on those limits. Barry Smith and Roy Thomas make CONAN—and CONAN is the best!

Gary S. Mann, 379 West Main St. Fredonia, N.Y. 14063

Then you'll be glad to hear, Gary—you, and the rest of Marveldom Assembled—that, although Big John Buscema is remaining as regular artist of our much-lauded mag, Roy and Barry are currently hard at work on an adaptation of one of

Robert E. Howard's most famous Conan stories. Where will it appear? How long will it be? What's the name of the story? When will it appear? The answer to all these questions is still shrouded in the misty near-future . . . but stick with us, friend. Marvel has things in store for you '73 that we guarantee will move and shake

you! 'Nuff said?

BIG THINGS ARE COMING FROM WATCH FOR 'EM---'NUFF SAID!



NASCIMENTO: O primeiro contato de muitos leitores com a história "A Filha do Gigante de Gelo" foi em Conon. The Borborian 16 (julho de 1972), editada em sua versão colorida com uma nova página de título, mas a publicação original dela foi em Savage Toles 1 (maio de 1971). Apresentamos aqui a versão original da Savage Toles, para leitores mais velhos, em preto-e-branco. Confira mais detalhes desta história em duas versões nas páginas 712-716.



SAVAGE

VOL. 1, NO. 1 MAY 1971

STAN LEE EDITOR and DIRECTOR OF ART

ROY THOMAS ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CONAN the

PRODUCTION BY.....

LETTERING BY.....

JOHN VERPOORTEN PRODUCTION MANAGER

ROY THOMAS and

CONTENTS

BARBARIAN	BARRY SMITH	~
the FURY of the FEMIZONS	STAN LEE and JOHN ROMITA	14
MAN/THING	GERRY CONWAY and GRAY MORROW	25
BLACK SERGE BROTHER	and GENE COLAN	36
KA-ZAR	STAN LEE and JOHN BUSCEMA	48
COVER PAINTING BY JOHN BUSCEMA		















Afogando-se no próprio sangue, o vanir pereceu aos pes de conan.





... DILANDO O BÁRBARO DEU AS COSTAS PARA SE AFASTAR DA PLANICIE FLAGELADA ONDE MATADORES, TANTO LOIROS GUANTO RUIVOS, SAZIAM IMBRICADOS NO AMPLEXO DA MORTE.















Com suas cotas de malha reluzindo qual uma geada ao nascer do sol... e ostentando nos olhos austeros um assombroso fulgor... os dois titas responderam com **Rosnados** que lembravam o estridor de um icebero











EVOCANDO UMA DERRADEIRA DESCARGA DE PODER DIVINO, A TITÁNICA ENTIDADE SE AVOLUMOU SOBRE O CIMERIO... COMO SE FOSSE UM COLOSSO ESCULPIDO EM DELO.

















Солтиро, ароз им сето е им резезреваро емрирало...



... A NINFA CONSEGUIU DESVENCILHAR-SE DOS BRAÇOS DE CONAN.









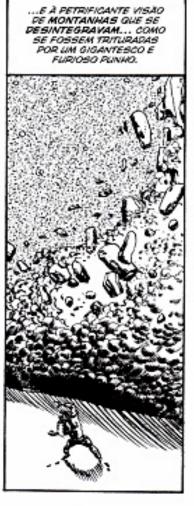




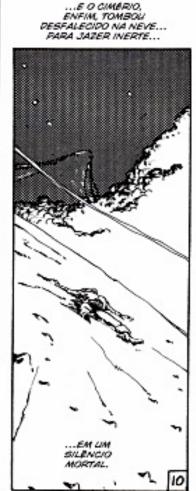














THE STORY BEHIND THE SCENES



CONAN

There isn't much left to say about Robert E. Howard.

If you're a fan of heroic fantasy, you've already read it ten times in L. Sprague de Camp's introductions to the Lancer paperback editions of the adventures of Conan. But if you're a newie—well, maybe we'd better go over it one more time.

Howard was born (1906). He lived, wrote, sold (beginning 1925). He died far too soon (1936). But in that short span of time, while most of us are learning to tie our shoelaces properly, he created the fantasy genre now called sword-and-sorcery, in a story about an Atlantean barbarian-turned-king named Kull. And then he peaked with Conan the Cimmerian—eighteen tales published in his lifetime (one of them novel-length) about the greatest barbarian hero of all time, set in REH's imaginary Hyborian Age of 10,000 B.C.

Some will say it was inevitable that Conanand Marvel Comics meet sconer or later and they did, smack in the middle of 1970, when CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1 electrified comic-book fandom. But that was merely the beginning; this is, perhaps, a culmination. Conan with the stops taken out. Conan as (we think) he was meant to be portrayed in one of Robert E. Howard's own tales (first published some 15 years after his untimely death)—by scripter/adapter Roy Thomas and British-born artist Barry Smith. They had a ball. They hope it shows.

If you've met Conan before, welcome. If you haven't, welcome—but don't forget to duck those singing, swinging swords! En gardel



THE SISTERHOOD

Women's liberation.

It's all around us, be we male or female. Marches, intellectual treatises, picketing, braburning, some four-letter forensics, and *more* burnings—not always of bras, "Women are the equals of men every day, in every way!" Men are beginning to believe it, Women always knew it.

So what happens if maybe we come the full circle in, say, the next hundred years or so? What if women turn the rascals out—and we do mean out! What would we have then? A better world? Perhaps. A gentler world. Could be. A different world? Believe it.

Stan Lee got to wondering—and, by and by, he set imaginative artist Johnny Romita to wondering along with him. The result is, perhaps, something just a wee bit new under the sun. Not quite sword-and-sorcery—certainly not science-fiction—and not exactly a political polemic. Robin Morgan clobbers Buck Rogers in the 25th century! Kate Millett zaps both Flash Gordon and Ming the Merciless—then takes over Mongo for good measure.

The hand that rocks the cradle really rules the world!



MAN-THING

He is born not in a fetid, festering swamp, but in an air-conditioned office though the air-conditioning doesn't always work.

Editor Stan Lee has a title: The Man-Thing. And a concept: A man who becomes a powerful, misshapen monster-at the price of his sanity, perhaps his very soul. Stan and sidekick Roy Thomas discuss maybe five different origins (we'll let you try guessing the other four). Then they get to discussing artists-and the name Gray Morrow comes up. Known throughout the comics industry as one of the best draftsmen in the business, Gray is a natural-and so, with a story-synopsis done by Roy, the multi-talented Mr. Morrow sets to work with indescribable gusto. A new element enters the picture: Gerard Conway. Call him a beginner. Author of only a couple of science-fiction books and not more than a handful of published s-f stories. Gerry, too, gets truly turned on-and the rest, as everybody says, is history.

Just one warning, in case you're scanning this before you plunge into the actual story; Don't read it in bed-unless nightmares turn you on.



BLACK BROTHER

Sergius O'Shaughnessy isn't his real name, of course. Just a pseudonym borrowed from Norman Mailer—Deer Park, to be exact. But our Sergius—author of this story about the awakening giant which is the New Africa, the Emerging Nations, the Third World—is a concerned young writer whom we invited to turn himself loose. And we handed him Gene Colan and Tom Palmer—whose DR.

STRANGE for Marvel Comics has been called one of the high spots of the medium—as a pencil-and-ink team. It turned out to be enough.

This tale may offend someone whose polltical education ended with Uncle Tom's Cabin. But it isn't designed to offend. Not anybody. It's simply a story—or at least, the beginning of a story—that we thought ought to be told. And, to the best of our humble ability, it tells it like it is. The heroes are real—because they are fallible. The villains live and breathe—because they don't really think they are villains at all, you see.

But if each team has God on its side then who is left over to referee?



KA-ZAR

A checkered career, this Ka-Zar.

October 1936. Publisher Martin Goodman, already knee-deep in the burgeoning field of pulp magazines, gives birth to a new title; KA-ZAR. The cast: a blond-haired, blue-eyed savage, and every jungle-man's best friend—his pet Iton. 76 action-packed pages of derring-do set in the heart of the steaming Congo by author Bob Byrd. (A real name? A pseudonym? No one seems to know.) Final fate: Alas! Cancellation of the title after three (count 'em, three) issues.

Move shead now, 1939, Martin Goodman enters the comic-book field with MARVEL COMICS #1, humble beginning of what would one day become the mighty Marvel Comics Group. Notable heroes in that collectors'-tiem (now up to \$300) issue: The Human Torch, The Sub-Mariner—and Ka-Zar the Great (with Zar, his still-faithful llon). A much longer career, but never stardom—and one fine day, oblivion.

A big jump this time, To 1965. In the heart of the steaming Antarctic, the mutant X-Men (stars of their own Marvel comic-mag) discover a jungle that time forgot—a snarling sabretooth—and the tiger's steel-muscled master. Ke-Zar, in his newest, his greatest incarnation. Story by one Stan Lee, Ka-Zar kicks around for a few years—plays second fiddle to Spider-Man, Daredevil, even the X-Men again. He's drawn by the best in comicdom: Neal Adams, John Romita, Jack Kirby, Gene Colan, Eventually he gets his own half-a-book series.

And now, finally: the longest feature in the premiere issue of SAVAGE TALES. Story once again by Stan Lee—and art by one of the greats, John Buscema.

Ka-Zar has come of age. At last.

-RT

We can read. So write. Next issue: A letters page.

Send those cards, letters, and candygrams

SAVAGE TALES Marvel Comics Group 625 Madison Avenue New York, N.Y. 10022 WHILE YOU'RE BREATHLESSLY WAITING FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF SAVAGE TALES, YOU'LL FIND THE SAME KIND OF GALVANIZED ACTION IN THE NEW BREED OF COMIC-MAGS FROM MIND-STAGGERING MARVEL!



and WABU

THE LORD OF THE HIDDEN JUNGLE... AND HIS SNARLING SABER-TOOTHED ALLY.

CONANA NA PARIANA

ROBERT E. HOWARD'S IMMORTAL SWORD-AND-SORCERY HERO---AMID THE PERILS OF A WORLD THAT TIME FORGOT!





WULL

THE CONQUEROR

BEFORE THERE WAS CONAN-BEFORE MANY-TOWERED ATLANTIS
SANK-- THERE WAS KING KULL!

HEROIC FANTASY AT ITS BEST!

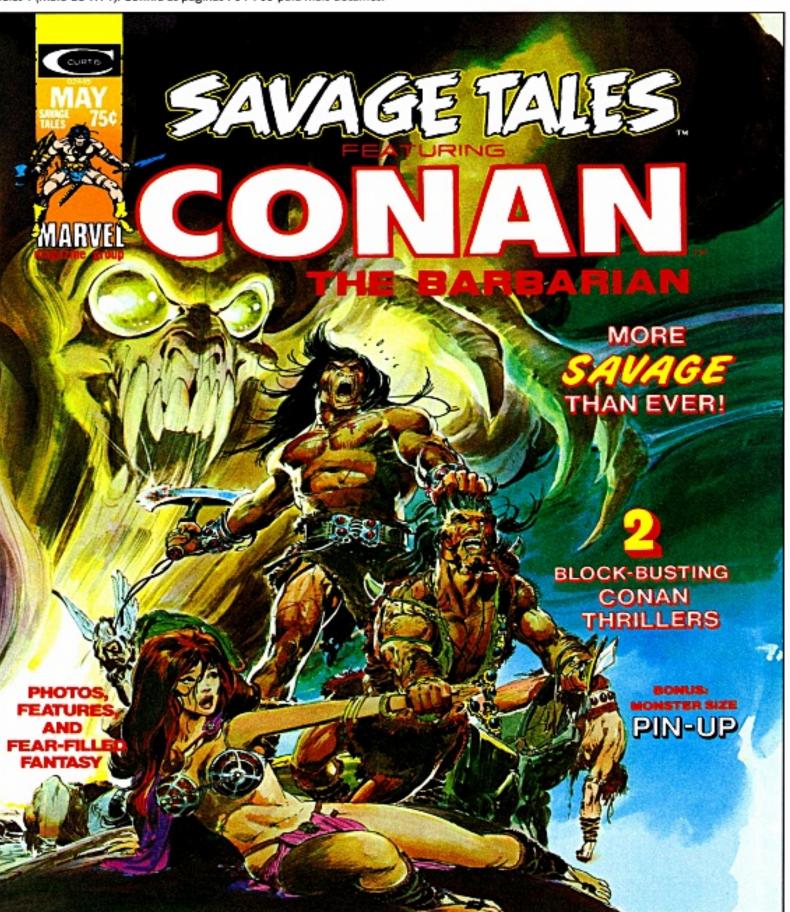
MIGHTY MARVEL IS ON THE MOVE AGAIN!

NEXT



YOU MUST NOT MISS IT!

SEGUNDA VIDA: A revista Savage Tales foi cancelada depois de sua primeira edição, mas a história protagonizada por Conan agendada para a edição 2, "O Habitante das Trevas", já havia sido finalizada. Com a intenção de não jogar fora o grande esforço empregado nela, a história foi editada dentro do selo do Comics Code e publicada em cores em Conan, The Barbarian 12 (dezembro de 1971). Quando o sucesso de Conan, The Barbarian levou ao retorno de Savage Tales, a versão original, em preto-e-branco e para leitores adultos, foi publicada em Savage Tales 4 (maio de 1974). Confira as páginas 704-705 para mais detalhes.



STAN LEE presents

SAVACE TALES

COÑAN.

THE BARBARIAN

ROY THOMAS Editor MARV WOLFMAN Associate Editor

MURRAY FRIEDMAN & JOHN VERPOORTEN
Production

Editorial Staff: DON McGREGOR, DOUG MOENCH, TONY ISABELLA,

GERRY CONWAY, CARLA JOSEPH

Art Director: JOHN ROMITA

Design Director: MARCIA GLOSTER

Soul and Inspiration: ROBERT E. HOWARD Technical Advisors: GLENN LORD and LIN CARTER

Cover: NEAL ADAMS

Table of Contents

JASON AND HIS
ELECTRIC ARGONAUTS......28
Harryhausen, hydras, harpies— and heroes.

THE HOUR OF THE GNOME42
Conan in hardback! The books that time forgot!

THE DWELLER IN THE DARK49
Conan at bay— alone, against a monster from the primordial depths.

And here's your collectors'-item CONAN PIN-UP for this issue, Hyborlophile! Snip it and study it to see how a Barbarian fights— even with a *staple* right in the hauberk! Green to civilization and entirely lawless by nature, Conan found the most congenial life that of a professional thief in Zamora and later in the small city-states to the west of that exotic kingdom. Taking service in one of these nameless states with the harried Prince Murilo, he has a taste of fighting as a profession, and being tired of the decadent life of a thief he sets out to look over the rest of the civilized world, with an eye to making it his oyster.

(From "A Probable Outline of Come's Career" by Miller and Clark'.)



During the long months between the events chronicled in "Rogues in the House" (CONAN THE BARBARIAN #11) and his enlistment in the mercenary forces of empire-gathering Turan to the east, Conan has many strange and wonderful adventures.

This is one of the strangest



























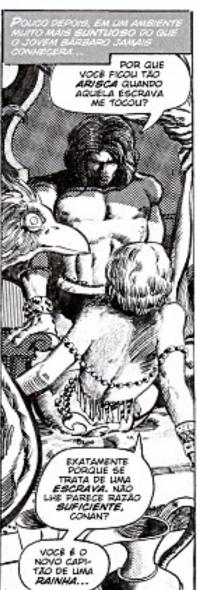






























































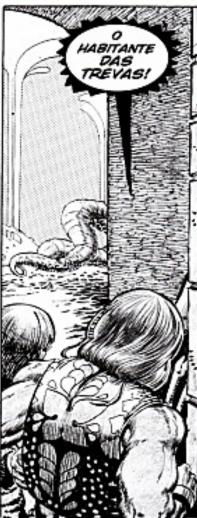


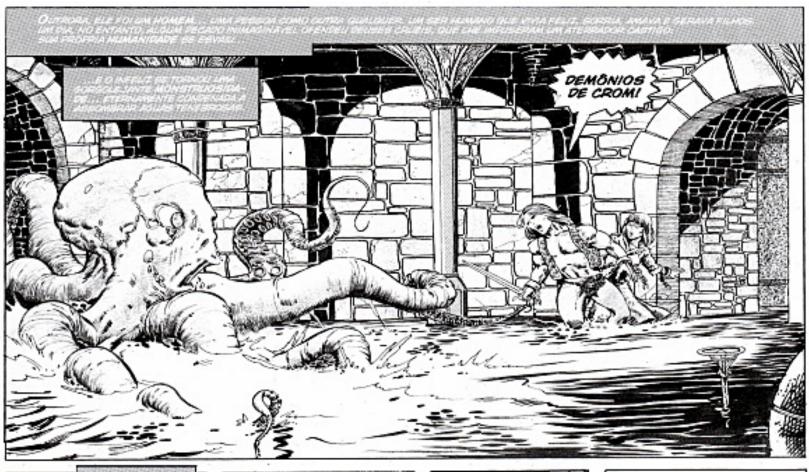




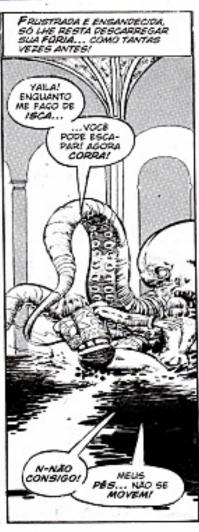














































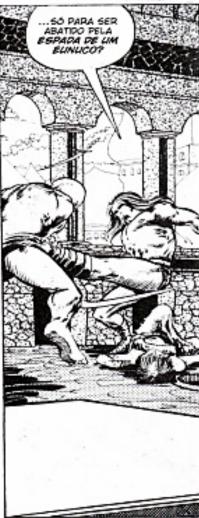






























































CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 1, ROTEIRO

Por Roy Thomas (anotações sobre paginação por Barry Winsdor-Smith).

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1

Splash may be symbolic pose of Conan, or start of battle scene in story. As I said in letter, leaveroom for blurb giving a couple of words of back-ground on he quasi-historical series--and title will be "The Coming of CONAN!"

Lettering could be done in fire, maybe .. up to you.

Anyway, the story starts as I said with Conan as one of that band of AEsir fighting the Hyperboreans. (See physical descriptions of races in "Hyborian Age" essay in CONAN.) P. 35 gives only recounting that's given; we're gonna beef

it up a bit.

Conan, himself no weakling, comes to aid of one giant, bearded AEsir besieged by many Hyperboreans. They m hew about. This guy (Ajax, I'll call him, after the Greek hero) and Conan form a blood

friendship in battle.

Battle is over -- AEsir have forced Hyperboreans into a pass where they'll

attack after regrouping. This story, by the way, takes place in the North Country, but it's only nippy out -- small patches of snow left from winter, etc. Like Sweden in summer or spring, maybe. Conan may don fur cape (crude) after battle; don't let it get in way of

action, though.

Remember also: few of these barbarians, if any, would own much real armor. Maybe Conan explains to Ajax that his blacksmith father made his & helmet, etc.

Don't let the story go into flashback, though -- plenty of that later!

Meanwhile, the leader of the Hyperboreans (a mean, tall, lanky cuss -- give him also distinctive headgear, like a

bear or wolf's head) and one of his aides know AEsir will win-- unless they come up with some thing. They do -- they be thinking

about deserting their own men, when ...

66 2

They wander into cave to hide -- and promptly find they've entered the spooky cave of a Shaman (wixard). He's Z old and evil looking -- seems to know why they're there before they do, etc. Interesting cavern -- and a young girl

(there should always be a girl or two in these stories, y'know) who waits on him somewhat fearfully.

Shaman says he can help them -- in exchange for a change for a prisoner for an upcoming sacrifice. (Hints otherwise it maybe them.) They accept. He sits before a strange crystal that fell from sky years before -- looks into it and begins incanatation. (Maybe the two booked into it -- saw worlds beyond worlds.)

Cortesia da HeritageAuctions.com

2

Second battle coming up -- and AEsir, with Conan and Ajax in forefront, are beating hell out of Hyperborians (individual bravery from Conan esp. -- we don't want to underplay him in his first issue, after all!).

... When suddenly, black forms sweep down from the skies. Bat-winged types, seven feet tall, arms that are thin and tremendously powerful and are extraordinarily long, etc.

Battle -- with AEsir being routed. Ajax killed here -- and Conan flies into a rage! Play this up!

Grabs onto the batty who felled Ajax (from behind, natch), and they fight as the batty struggles skyward. Conan keeps stabbing away, oblivious to fact that if the batty falls, he does. And it does -- and he does, landing hard in soft snow. (Out for count.)

Hyperborians have their captive and their xxxx sacrifice. He is herded along, maybe with a few remnants (though maybe it's better, for neatness' sake, if all other AEsir were killed).

And into the presence of the Shaman. I Have batties there, too -- with even the Hyperborians wary of them.

Conas, stalling for time (maybe to work loose bonds), asks old Shaman for explanation. Shamag gives it -- in fix girc slips (a knife form of important flashback.

He tells a bit about the Hyborian Age -- mainly about the sinking of Atlantis thousands of years ago. (And before that. a bit about Kull as one of the pre-Cataclysmic Kings -- the blood of Atlantis runs in Conan's veins, too.)

Tells about rise of places after Cataclysm (swiftly) -- sees past events in the life of Conan. Go thru the events on p. 35 of CONAN: being born on a battlefield, his first battle at Venarium, etc.

And the Shaman even sees into the future -- to his own astonishment, for this means Conan may not die at this time. Sees Conan as a king himself, paralleling the glory of Kull. Thru all this, show the astoningment of Conan -- who scoffs at his impending kingship, esp.

Still, Ke Conan girds the old man on -- to see the ice age that ends the Hyborian age, and the rise of Egyptian and other civilizations later -- maybe end with scene of man's conquest of space, a scene too big for Shaman to handle -- he collapses!!

3.

And as he does -- and Hyperborians (incl. ledder and aide) are equally astonished -- Conan, his simple barbarian mind not bothering to try to comprehend and therefore not so addled, STRIKES!

GIRCI CON SOMES - SLEER

Battles way thru Hyperboreans near him -- thru a battle or two-- and picks up the crystal (thru which all this was seen, of course). We see him about to hurl it down at the old man -- but of course we don't see the gore all over the gloor.

As the crystal hits it explodes in some colorful way ... demons fade back to nether world from which they were sum-moned... Hyperborians all killed... only Conan escapes.

Alone now ... last survivor of his first expedition as a mercenary ... he decides to head southward, looks back on smouldering ruins of cavern.

And he thinks of the prediction that some day he'll be a king ... if he lives long enough! Shrugs it off... there are more immediate things to worry about, like food for the belly. End with dramatic scene of him

looking down on smoking ruins or walking away, something like that. Gotta find a new sword ...

Page 14.

((Make it so that this story could lead without inconsistencies into "The Thing in the Crypt." I don't know if Conan's wearing chains in that one or not, but I think he is -- which means Hyperborians should have chained him, etc.

A couple of notes: As I look back over this story, I see that I'll probably be writing rather different motivation for certain segments of it, depending on your own ideas and your drawings. You can change, telescope, etc. -- but try to get the basic materials in, esp. playing up SEAR Conan and the flashback (which needn't be more than a few pages at most -- but should give clear history of the world).

Also, are you aware that this is really a 192 19-page story (as are all stories nowadays in regular books), but with pax page 12 divisible in half horizontally so that it can become pp. 12 and 13 -- clear 'nuff? We had some sheets you were supposed to be sent, but I have no faith in its being done.

Also, please remember that I want to add no thought balloons in story. All thoughts will be Conan's (no one else's), and done in caption. Oh yeah...

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 1, ROTEIRO (CONTINUAÇÃO)

Por Roy Thomas (anotações sobre paginação por Barry Winsdor-Smith).

4

I just realized I introduced this cute girl in the story and didn't do anything with her. Please have her more important in story. Maybe she's killed -- or better, maybe Conan tries to be gallant and rescue her, but she turns out to be one of the batties with a spell over her to make her human. I'll leave it to you -- but we should have a little feminine appeal.

And now, it's back to bed for the kid. I feel like hell-- make what you can out of this synopsis. I've got faith in you-- as longs as you keep that storytelling clear above all else.

By the way, in case you've got your thinking-cap on (I max don't, just now), the next story (also chronological) will probably deal with the snowages mentioned on p. 27 of CONAN. I thought Conan would discover a place where the snow-apes (in warm climate, so he doesn't have to wear fur all the time) rule the remnants of the expedition mentioned m in that paragraph. Any ideas you have will be appreciated; this story (#2) will probably occur after the "Thing in Crypt" story. I want to keep thingsmoving slowly since we're gonna be putting out this mag monthly. The first story (choonologically) of Conan is "Elephant Tower" in Zamoras- but with a bit of ingenuity, we can map spend a long time getting Conan from Hyperborea thru Brythunia (gotta look up what kinda thingies live there!) and into Zamora. See the way my mix mind works?

Hope you are well top.

Roy

P.S.: Remember to play up Conan. Or did I say that already? He's no Superman -- just as strong as two or three normal barbarians, and swifter than most.

MARVELMANIA 2 (OUTUBRO DE 1970), "TRIBUNA DO ROY"

Roy Thomas usou seu púlpito (ou tribuna, se preferir) na fanzine oficial da Marvel, a Marvelmania, para promover o lançamento de Conan, The Barbarian 1 com um artigo sobre a série e o desenvolvimento da capa da primeira edição.

ROY'S ROSTRUM

by ROY THOMAS



MARYELMANIA MONTHLY MAGAZINE

It's not a well-kept secret that I write from four to And I seven comics a month. opviously have little or no time for the type of writing which I ordinarily like to see go out over (or under) my own name. However, I believe very strongly in fandom as a developing point for new talent (Do I have a choice?) and I also believe in keeping the hardcore fans as informed as pos-sible of the how and why of things, so if you'll keep in mind that I don't really have the time for polishing, re-writing, and for those long moments of contemplative thought which it takes to come up with a clever, well-turned phrase, I shall try to sit down once a month and dash them off.

What will my rough-shod ramblings cover in future months? Just about anything that comes to my busy little mind, in all probability. One month I may launch into invective against fans who don't understand why and how things are done by pros-but most months, I'll be attempting instead to fill that information gap with details that you will not find (often for reasons of space) on the Bullpen Bulletin pages or in the letters pages

I write.
For various reasons, I'd
like to spend the remainder of
this first column (and perhaps
the second, as well:) on the
newest addition to the Marvel
lineup--a pet project of mine
called Conan the Barbarian.
To be published at first on a
bi-monthly basis, with the
first issue due out in the
middle of July, this book is
particularly near and dear to
my little heart--for reasons
which I'll explain in detail
next time around.

This issue, however, I thought I'd use our Cimmerian stalwart to illustrate something which will probably interest most fans-just how a Marvel cover is produced, right now, in the first half of the year 1970.

By the time we finally got around to thinking about a possible cover for the first issue of Conan, artist Barry Smith-nestling in the shadow of Buckingham Palace, as most

AT LEFT, the finished version of the first CONAN cover as it will appear when it graces the newsstand in your neighborhood soon. [Smith/Verpoorten] Por Roy Thomas.

ROSTRUM (continued)

Marvelites know by now--had no less than three issues of full pencilling under his belt. Thus, the slight insecurity he had felt and shown on the first issue was largely gone; the second and third issues had shown a surer, clearer grasp on both Conan himself and the spirit of the Hyborian Age, which is the way it should be. (Anybody out there remember those first few fumbling issues of mags called Pantastic Four and The Amazing Spider-Han?) But, more about those first three issues--and a fourth on which Barry is currently laboring--next month.

currently laboring -- next month.
For the nonce, let's lock
at how the cover was produced.
First, after discussing the
matter with me, staff artist
Marie Severin worked out a
pen-and-ink sketch (as she
does for most, though not all,
current Marvel covers). This
was done on 8" by ll" typing
paper, and is intended to be
used as a rough guide to the
actual artist at a later stage.

I had suggested a powerful figure of a besieged Conan, the obligatory ill-clad young lady at his knee, ringed about by barbarian foes--perhaps with a winged demon or two from the story swooping towards him from above. Marie rendered this quite well and clearly, forgetting only the pair of demons...which a simple knifeprod from me persuaded her to add. Stan then approved the cover (something which is not automatic -- an artist often goes through several sketches before an acceptable one is decided upon), as did publisher Martin Goodman; and the sketch (since lost) was sent to merrie olde England for Barry to pencil.

Barry later stated that he would have liked to ink it as well, and no doubt he'll be given a shot at doing precisely that on the second issue. However, this first time, we waited to see the pencilled cover first, just in case there were any substantial changes to be made. Like any comics company, Marvel is generally pickier about its covers than about any one panel within the mag itself. This

is as it should be, since the cover is at least a major factor (some say the chief factor) in the sales of any single issue of a magazine.

At any rate, Barry's pencilled cover appears on the cover of this magazine just as it came in to use. At first glance it will probably seem identical to the finished, inked-and-lettered cover--but a closer examination will reveal the changes wrought (at Stan's and my direction, for the most part) by John Verpoorten, who inked the cover-beautifully. I believe.

beautifully, I believe. The most important and noticeable change was in Conan's sword. As penciled by Barry, its point was hidden by the ax-handle in the foreground; I felt strongly that the tip of the blade should be thrusting toward the reader (and that approaching hatchetman). This John accomplished with a minimum of redrawing; at the same time he straightened the ax-handle itself, which seemed a bit crooked. (Many pencilers, Gil Kane among them, often do not use a ruler at all on straight lines within a story, relying upon the inker to take care of that detail -- so what Barry did was hardly unusual or slovenly craftsmanship.)

As he inked, John made other, less apparent changes He left off, for instance, certain tiny black specks which Barry had added on Conan's muscles, and which we reared might end up looking nothing more than a case of terminal blackheads. Again, this is hardly unusual; the supreme case of muscle-altering at Marvel, of course, was always Vince Colletta's inking of Jack Kirby's Thor, as a comparison of that mag with Jack's other titles would

quickly illustrate.
You will notice also that
John, as befits both his style
and the tastes of Marvel at
the present time, used a
thick-and-thin approach inspired by the likes of Joe
Sinnott and other powerful
inkers. While many artists
prefer their pencils inked
precisely as drawn, with a



single thickness to all lines, it's our feeling that Verpoorten's approach is a much more commercial one-and in this case is probably closer, in fact, to the way Barry would have inked the cover himself, since our British bombshell is a top-notch inker (and will, in fact, be inking the works of some other pencilers in an upcoming mystery-mag or two).

Other changes? There are

Other changes? There are a few--but I'll leave it to the individual reader to decide whether they're worth hunting for. The press of work beckens--and so, I'm told, does Marvelmania's deadline. Next time, I'll discuss how Narvel came to publish a Conanag in the first place--and precisely what a few Robert E. Howard devotees have had to say about the Thomas/Smith version.

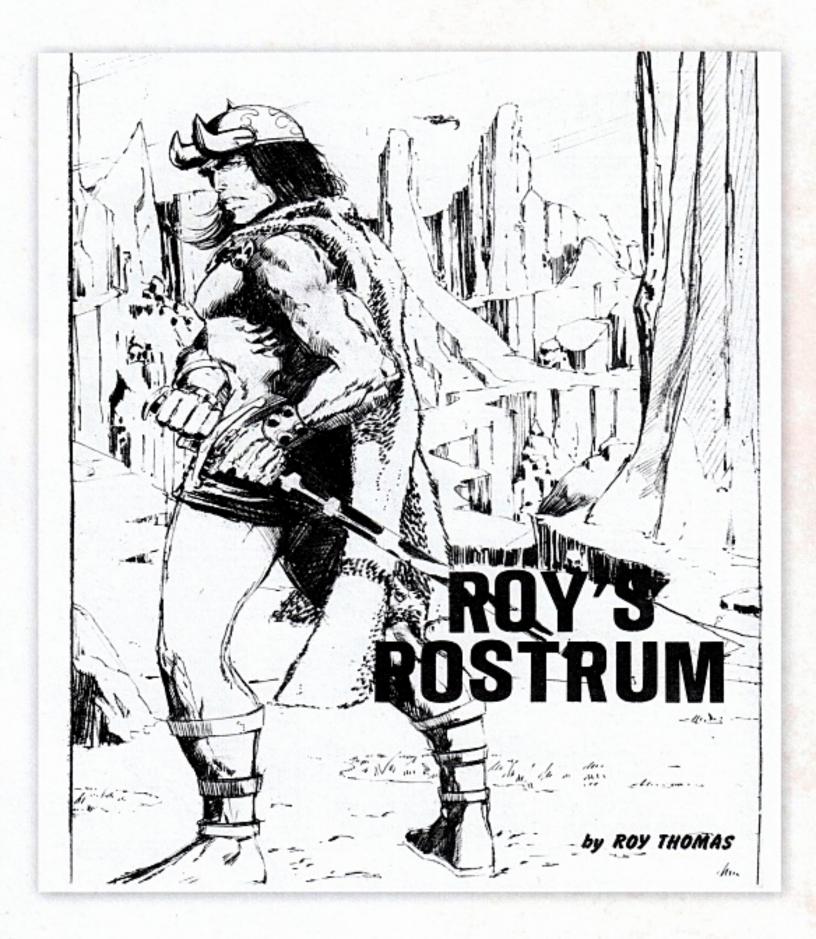
Later./

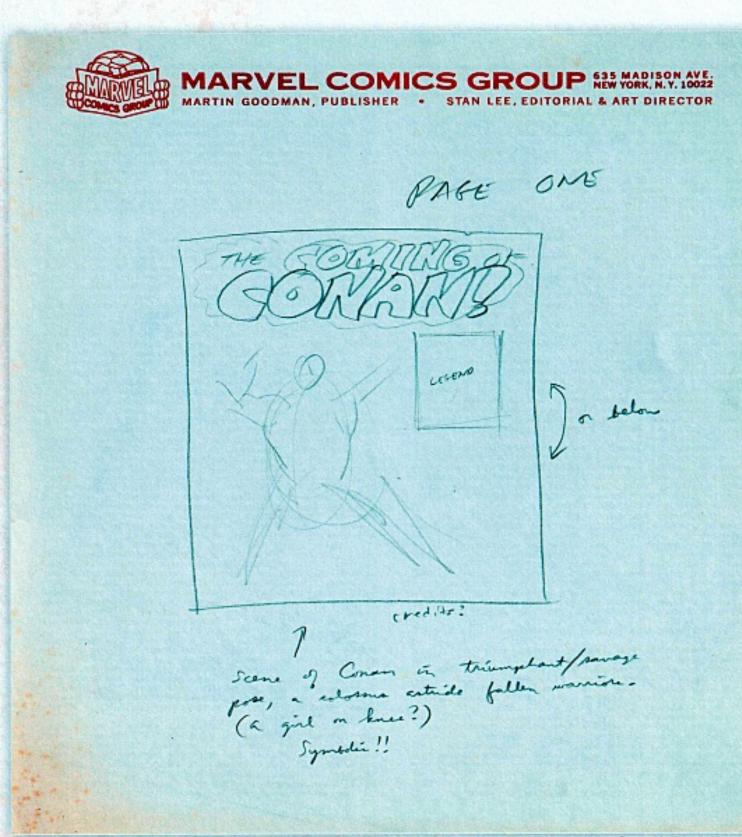


MARVELMANIA MONTHLY MAGAZINE

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 1, PÁGINA I, DESENHO NÃO UTILIZADO (PUBLICADO COMO ABERTURA DA "TRIBUNA DO ROY" EM MARVELMANIA 3)

Por Barry Windsor-Smith.





MARVELMANIA 3 (1971), "TRIBUNA DO ROY"

Roy Thomas continuou a promover Conan, The Barbarian e a levar os fãs para os bastidores de seu desenvolvimento em sua coluna na Marvelmania.

hero.

Conan certainly would make a good comic book o. Everyone was agreed upon that. Everyone except the dyed-in-the-wool purists insisted upon a requisite volume of blood in each four-color issue.

Everyone except the sheltered souls who felt that there sure was a lot of sex in Robert How-ard's original Coman stories, and that the tales couldn't survive without it

Everyone except those who felt that Frazetta was the only artist since da Vinci.

Everyone except those who thought it better not to put Conan the Cimmerian into comics ratto weaken the character to even the mi-

nutest degree.
And, finally...everyone but me.
The first time I tried to read a Conan story
was probably about 1967 when I picked up a copy
of Lancer Books' first paperback volume of Conan
the Adventurer. I had never heard of him before and didn't know that well over a dozen adventure stories had been printed in the old Weird Tales pulp magazine in the early and middle thirties. Still, the combination of a powerful Frank Fraz-etta cover and the back-cover blurb got to me.

There he was on the front of the book. Conan staring out at me with all the bristling intellect of a Mongoloid hockey-center, a blurry-looking girl growing thornlike out of his leg a-top what appeared to be a compost-heap of head-

hacked foes. Charming.

And that blurb: "A hero mightier than Tarzan

...Adventures more imaginative than Lord of the
Rings!" I had read a bit of Burroughs in my la-Rings!" Rings: I had read a bit of Burroughs in my lamented youth and was beginning to flirt demurely
with Tolkein's triple-tome, so I read on....And
then came the hooker: "The Conan stories are all
laid in Howard's imaginary Hyborian Age, between
the sinking of Atlantis and the beginning of recorded history."

Instantly, I had visions of a science-fiction masterwork concerning some sort of untamed...

**Torius untamable savage amidst the crumbling rem-

some untamable savage amidst the crumbling remnants of a super-scientific civilization, a sort of latter-day John Carter with moxie, only this trusty broadsword betwixt himself and the raygun toting hordes of lost Atlantis.

The first few pages of "People of the Black Circle", the first story in the volume, convinc-ed me I was wrong-that this wasn't really sci-ence fiction at all but straight fantasy; there ence fiction at all but straight fentasy; there were no ray-guns or air-ships and the sunken Atlantis had reached roughly the level of civilization of pre-Roman Gaul. In short, I felt I had I could not arouse the slightest iota of interest in this tale of what was obviously a princess from India. (Never mind that Howard may have called it "Vendhya" ... It was still India to

The book was buried in my closet and I for-

got I had it.

Meanwhile, the Lancer books caught on, there were letters to Marvel itself. Our readers wanted to see Burroughs material done in comics, and Tolkien material, and finally Conan. And es-pecially Conan, for that matter. It became ob-vious to me that, whereas Tolkien's appeal seened to be almost totally to the older (and, thus, minor) elements of our readership, the appeal of the Cimmerian cut across the board. Youngsters, no matter what their age, and doddering 30-year-olds--they all loved him. Teeny-boppers who had written with a shaky scrawl and college students

At left is Barry Smith's first drawing of Conan for Marvel, intended as the splash page for the first issue and later replaced with another.

who used an electric typewriter to conceal that they wrote with a shaky sorawl...they all loved his adventures. I began to get interested--from a strictly commercial point-of-view, you under-stand--I still didn't read any more of the stuff though.

And finally came the 1969 Comic Art Convent-ion in New York. Dick Giordano, Creepy publish-er Jim Warren, and I composed a panel on Econom-ics in the Comics. During the question-and-answer period, someone asked the three of us to say what our particular pet projects were which we'd like to see the comics undertake. I found myself mentioning Coman-since I was beginning to think that he might possibly sell to the same readers, that he might possibly sell to the same readers, those who had kept Thor and Namor healthy, happy and alive

Possibly

At any rate, I made a mental note to pursue the matter further. Somewhere along the line, I discussed the matter with Stan when he too com-mented on the possibilites of doing Conan or any similar character. But we had decided it might be too risky, inasmuch as the stories take place twelve-thousand years ago, and comics set in an

study of sword-and-sorcery material. (As the in-itiated call the genre) Weirdly enough, I began with Lin Carter's Thongor books--whose Valkarthan hero is a combination of John Carter and Con-an. I spoke to Carter (Lin, not John) about the

an. I spoke to Carter (Lin, not John) about the
possibilities of a Thongor comic and he seemed a
bit interested. We didn't discuss money.

[Why not Conan right away instead of Thongor, you ask? Frankly, I knew our financial situation was limited, and Marvel had not done one
of those "licensed" comic titles in twenty years
since My Friend Irma and Pinky Lee Comics. Conan
was star of one of the largest-selling paperback
series of all time and somehow seemed a distant star and outside our grasp or even contemplation for the time being. Thongor had the rayguns and air-ships of Barsoom mixed in with the barbarism and the time-lost feeling of Conan.

Stan liked the idea of Thongor as well as I did, and for the same reasons, and decided that it was I who should discuss the matter with our publisher, Martin Goodman. Stan himself has repeatedly stated that he's not really quite sure just what the term "sword-and-sorcery" means and garbled attempts at elucidation by frenetic fans had not made the point any clearer in his mind-or mine. Still, if I didn't know art, I knew if I liked it--and I rather liked Thongor. So, after mulling it over and considering a

so, after multing it over and considering a number of angles, did Mr. Goodman. Thongor the narbarian might well just be our next title.

But then, unexplainedly, things broke down. I told Carter of our offer, and was informed his agent would call me within the week. He didn't. I called Carter again, received the same assurances—followed by more weeks of silence. Frustration, veretion.

tration, vexation.

Meanwhile, I had begun to delve a bit more into sword-and-sorcery fiction to discover what I really liked about it. I read the remainder—the other four—of the Thongor novels and found them fun, if derivative. I read parts of Storm bringer by Moorcock, and sections of Fritz Lieb-er's Gray Mouser stuff, and found it probably to be better literature but poorer comic book matPor Roy Thomas.

erial. A glance at D.C.'s Nightmaster -- the only true sword-and-sorcery comic to date and a known flop--confirmed me in my opinion; for it was of the Moorcock/Leiber tradition and I felt it was bad, bad, basaad -- despite my respect for the men who put it together -- Denny O'Neil and pencillerinker Berní Wrightson.

And I began to page through a few of those

Conan books, as well. Strangely, I discovered that I was enjoying it more this go-round. I found that here was sensationalistic pulp-writer who really knew his trade. Too much blood-and-gore for my personal, self-styled tastes, with incidental and clumsy-and needless-sex and a hero who would be a real psychiatrist's nightmare--but still there was about the Conan stories an excitement, a sense of atmosphere and mood, that transcended Burroughs, Carter, and others I had read. Yes--at the risk of sounding anti-intellectual--even old Tolkien himseif. Not as good literature, perchance, as Tolkien and Lieber--but easily the best sword-n-sorcery hero of all for adaptation into comics--

with Howard's King Kull, a close runner-up.

And meanwhile my phone grew studded with an array of cob-webs while I waited in vain for Lin Carter's agent to call. (He never did. I still

don't know why.)

Fortunately, in the introductions to sever-al of the Conan volumes, L. Sprague de Camp gave the address of Glenn Lord, literary executor of the Howard estate--largely because Lord publish-ed the Howard Collector, a sometime publication, which keeps digging up previously unpublished... and unread Howard manuscripts. I contacted Lord for several reasons -- including a private project of my own, since abandoned -- and found him interested in seeing Conan reach the younger masses --through a comic book.

One thing led to another and -- after a seem-

ingly interminable delay, caused solely by Mar-vel's lawyers' failure to act promptly--the very first issue of Conan the Barbarian is almost up-on the newsstands as I write these perishable... these soft-spoken words.

EDITORIAL EPILOGUE: The staff of this magazine would like to thank ROY THOMAS for agreeing to take time out of an incredibly-busy schedule to appear in the contents of our magazine. We would also like to announce that what you have just read is merely part I in the story of how the CONAN comic came to be. Next month--The search to find an artist and the problems involved in preparing artist and the problems involved in preparing artist and the problems involved in preparing everybody's favorite barbarian for his conicedebut. It wasn't easy, believe us, and it involved redrawing portions of the first story a number of times. [As you might imagine, we'll also be showing you those pages which were removed from the finished product inasmuch as we know you Marvelmaniacs out there would behead us if we didn't] Roy will also discuss, next month, some of the negative comments received, thus far, about the book.

The advertisment which appears below is not a current one and just because it says "On' Sale Now!" is no reason for you to rush to your old newsstand and tear it apart looking for #2 because it won't be there for a month or so. We thought you'd like to see a drawing of Conancas inked by Barry Smith, in addition to his astonishing pencilling. And for you completist members, the lettering at right was done by an old-reliable--Sam Rosen, while the lettering-over the grey tone--at left was by Roy Thomas, himself. Isn't that interesting? Oh, well..!



MARVELMANIA 4 (1971), "TRIBUNA DO ROY"

Em sua última "Tribuna do Roy" focada em *Conon, The Borborion,* Roy Thomas mergulhou ainda mais fundo no desenvolvimento da estreia de Conan nos quadrinhos.



Last month, we discussed how it came to pass that Marvel decided to produce a comic of <u>Conan</u> the <u>Barbarian</u> and by the time you read the <u>first</u> issue and see how the comic finally materialized on the stands.

Not quite the way I'd like it, though--There are always things which don't work out the way I want. Due to budgetary limitations, my original choice for penciller--John Buscema, who loves to do sword-and-sorcery art even though he does not read the stories--was out of the question. Jim Steranko was dormant and mumbling about his own Talon character, who will doubtlessly be appearing someday somehow somewhere; Jack Kirby, best super-hero artist of all time, wasn't available.

And then there was Barry Smith, my personal second choice. A talented young Britisher, recently returned to the Isles, and all of twenty summers old. Always on the verge of proving he was the truly good comic book artist that we all felt he would one day be. Willing to read and work over the material, and eager to try his all at a strip which hadn't already been established by someone else. Barry Smith it was...and I am glad!

Now I set about in earnest to read all Conan material. And I found this time a distinct pleasure in some of the better stories (mostly the ones by Robert E. Howard himself; L. Sprague de Camp was a smoother writer, but his stories just didn't seem like Conan to me. Lin Carter seemed much like de Camp, though less sure-handed as a writer. And Nyborg's Return of Conan read too much like a bad Burroughs pastiche—the one real loser in the ten published volumes, for my money!) Barry read several of the books, too—and then, working from my rather sketchy synopsis he began to draw.

then, working from my began to draw.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: When Howard, the creator of CONAN died at age thirty, several Conan stories had been printed in the Weird Tales pulp. More recently, the demand for Conan adventures in the paperback books caused several writers, Carter, de Camp, and Myborg, to be engaged to complete a number of unfinished Howard stories, adapt other Howard tales into Conan tales, or to completely originate new Conan stories to fill the demand.]

The first result was not, frankly, a happy one as far as either Stan or Barry or I was concerned. From the very splash page, things failed to go quite as we'd wanted them to. Barry had

as we expected, plunged right into the story for a scene of Conan whirling about [Reprinted here last issue], albeit in rather restrained fashion on the first page. Barry promptly had him leap off a cliff into a pile of Vanir. Now, I'm just as big on in medias res as the next writer—but I felt that this would make it difficult to acclimate the reader to the fact that he was in a world of 12,000 years ago which was physically 6 mystically different from today's, or even yesterday's, world; besides, there just wasn't that good action we needed in the first few pages of the book. After that it began to pick up and by the second half of the book, Barry was "feeling" Conan and drawing Conan.

SO-I sliced a brief skirmish out of those last few pages where it actually retarded climay

So--I sliced a brief skirmish out of those last few pages where it actually retarded climax building, and asked Barry to redraw the splash-and insert a new second page, showing the Vanir and Aesir battling it out and establishing Conan before he leaped off that cliff shouting a famous "By Crom!" The end result was a much happier book, although still one with which we were not totally satisfied. Dan Adkins, long one of my favorite inkers, did a creditable job on the issue--but somehow he didn't seem precisely the inker for Conan, on second glance. (There were other considerations for taking Dan off Conan as well, none of them a discredit to Dan's considerable talent, but they are extranneous here and I won't go into them.)

Thus, it was with some trepidation that I roughly plotted the second issue. The end product, this time, however--though quite different from what I had envisioned when I wrote the synopsis--was one of the best art jobs Barry turned in to date, with some crystal-clear story telling, improved art and layouts, and a firm grasp on just what the material was all about. (This is all the more odd because this second issue is as much Burroughs-oriented as Howardesque, even though Barry professes never to have read any of Edgar Rice Burroughs' work--and I've read precious little of him since I was 14 or so.) At any rate, it was with the second issue, particularly that I became truly proud to be associated with the comic--and I think Barry feels the same way.

We immediately began work on future issues, all to be published chronologically and in agreement with the informal history of Conan's career as mapped out years ago by fans. Thus this

MARVELMANIA 4 (1971), "TRIBUNA DO ROY" (CONTINUAÇÃO)

Por Roy Thomas; contando também com arte original à lápis por Barry Windsor-Smith para o quarto final de Conon, The Barbarian I, inutilizada depois de a página de título ser redesenhada e a história ser retrabalhada.





ILLUSTRATIONS ON THIS AND THE FOLLOWING PAGE ARE UNUSED PAGES FROM CONAN #1, PENCILLED BY BARRY SMITH.

first issue illustrates the "Fruitless raiding against the Vanir" mentioned in the Lancer volume Conan, while the second issue takes place as not too far afterward; the beast-men of \$2 take their existence from passages in Howard's "Hyborian Age" essay (pp. 25 and 27 of Conan, if you want to look it up). Number three Carries Conan to the border between Hyperborea and Brythunia-in order to establish the long-standing hatreds, Conan feels for the Hyperboreans-mentioned in a number of volumes. And with \$4, we have-"Tower of the Elephant," an adaptation of the earliest, (chronological) Conan tale written by Howard.

of the Elephant, an adaptation of the earliest, (chronological) Conan tale written by Howard.

A word about the series. We'll be adapting many of the actual Robert E. Howard Conan stories—though not those written by de Camp, Carter and Nyborg. Legal reasons, you understand. Here and there, where de Camp edited Howard, we'll be working from the original Howard manuscripts (or Xerox copies thereof) so that a few facts and a few names will be different. Confusing, though, only to the expert—and the purist—whose weight in the balance in next to nil. anyway.

only to the expert-rand the purist--whose weight in the balance in next to nil, anyway.

And, as much as de Camp did with certain of the stories, we'll be adapting various non-Conan tales into Conan stories, something often rather easy to do. Issue \$3, for instance, is an adaptation of the posthumously-published Howard tale "The Grey God Passes" which has a slave-hero by the name of Conn (close, no?) and which contains several elements of considerable literary merit. Good comic book material, too!

Good comic book material, too!

--And if you don't like the series by when
you get to #4, "The Tower of the Elephant," I'd
suggest you swear off it forever because it will

never take. In it, I believe that Barry and I acheived the balance between literary and artistic and commercial considerations which we have been striving long months to achieve. Whether I shall find that anyone likes that issue or notes I shall doubtless consider it one of the best of the Marvel or non-Marvel comics of 1971....with scarcely a blush crossing my dimpled cheeks. I think I know good comic books--And this is a real good one.

[Sal Buscema, by the way, takes over on the inking with issue \$2, and while he's not necessarily a better inker than Adkins, per se-That's not important anyway...he lends to Barry Smith's pencils an illustrative approach which is almost perfect. Only a fan who has a shrine to Frazetta resting in his alcove could fail to find some merit in the Smith/S. Buscema collaboration.

But, enough bugle-blowing. After all, as I write these lines, I know than the fans will be with their own opinions, and that it is theirs-not mine-that will eventually make or break the book. Some of those opinions, in fact, began to arrive at our offices even before the book came out.

This hardly surprised me. Long before the news of the coming of Conan to Marvel comics had broken in fanzines, I predicted precisely tones and types of mail we would receive in advance of the book's publication--which will probably be a great deal like the mail that will arrive in July and August when the magazine is on the newstands.

Many notes, of course, were pure congratulatory epistles--amazed but glad that Marvel was responding to fan pressure (and it is, to a certain extent, no doubt about it). Many expressed the viewpoint that only Frank Frazetta (or possibly one of his disciples such as youngblooded-

MARVELMANIA 4 (1971), "TRIBUNA DO ROY" (CONTINUAÇÃO)

Por Roy Thomas; no topo, mais uma leva de ilustrações de Barry Windsor-Smith para Conan, The Barbarian 1 não utilizadas depois de a história ser revisada.





Berni Wrightson, who is now doing a <u>King Kull</u> adaptation for us) could possibly illustrate it. I won't dignify that viewpoint with much reply, even though I admire Prazetta's artwork, because Conan got along just fine for some years before Prazetta came on the scene--and these over-eager souls forget that, at least before this comicbook, sword-and-sorcery has been primarily a medium for <u>writers</u>, not artists.

souls lorget that, at least before this comicbook, sword-and-sorcery has been primarily a medium for writers, not artists.

Other notes, of course, castigated us even
for trying to do a Conan comic under the Comics
Code. The limitations on blood and sex in Codeapproved comics, they felt, would stop us from a
decent interpretation. I don't agree, obviously
but this point is, at least, a defensible one.

A few readers, not fans of Barry's work in

A few readers, not fans of Barry's work in the past, learned that Smith was to do the drawing and denounced it, sight unseen. I expected, that I would be denounced for daring to tread in the footsteps of Howard and de Camp, as well, but that's one prediction that hasn't materializedyet.

One particularly distasteful individual upon hearing but the vaguest rumor of Marvel publishing Conan as a comic book-wrote me a personal diatribe which vilified the whole idea. He saw himself as a self-appointed committee-of-one to protect the valiant Cimmerian from the ravage by Marvel, DC, or any other card-carrying Comics Code member. He was, he intimated, in possession of L. Sprague de Camp's actual home address, and he was going to write him a personal letter, urging him to take action against us. (In point

of fact, de Camp seems not to have felt strongly one way or the other about the proposed comic as it concerned neither his written material nor a paperback he had done.)

outside of shooting them or ignoring them. I was something closer to the second extreme, though I couldn't resist pointing out to the skeptic that even the critics in the New York Times wait until after they've seen a play to review it. I'd suggested then that he give us one issue, preferably a few, since a comic book is a growing—a progressing organism...And then write a more coherent criticism which would be given such consideration as it deserves. He hasn't troubled a certain Associate Editor at Marvel since.

Luckily, those persons who have viewed one or more Conan tales in advance of publication --- they have, despite reservations, been much more enthusiastic. Writer Ted White, never a strong Barry Smith fan, felt our British bombshell had finally come of age by the second issue. Glenn Lord, executor of the Robert E. Howard estate, commented that he preferred Smith's rendition to the more "brutish" Frazetta version. (as do I.)

One thing, though, seems for certain. For as long as Conan the Barbarian is published, in comic book form by Marvel, there are certain to be admirers and detractors--writing page after page of learned and passionate discourse on each issue.

I hope they go on writing for a long...long time.

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 1, página 4, arte original

Desenhos por Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final por Dan Adkins.



BOLETINS DA REDAÇÃO MARVEL, MAIO DE 1970, JUNHO DE 1970 E OUTUBRO DE 1970

A Marvel soltou prévias do lançamento do gibi do Conan em duas notas em maio e junho de 1970 nas páginas do Boletim da Redação (esquerda e centro) e depois deu um lembrete do lançamento de Conan, The Barbarian em outubro de 1970 (direita).

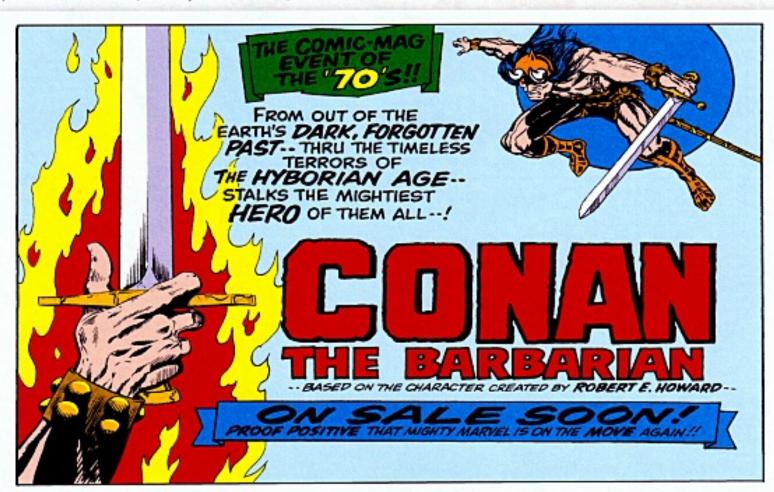
ITEM! Now let's talk about new developments. BASHFUL BARRY SMITH'S returning to the States from merrie olde England to work on a new top-secret project for us. We can't spell it out just yet, but we've a hunch you're gonna call it mildly sensational!

ITEM! Now it can be told! The name of the mag which BARRY SMITH is drawing is — CONAN THE BARBARIAN! Watch for it! Who says mighty Marvel isn't on the move again?

ITEMS! We have to be brief now. 'cause space is running out. CONAN THE BARBARIAN debuts this month. Miss it at your own risk! Also, watch for the SPIDER.MAN KING-SIZE, the FANTASTIC FOUR KING-SIZE, the X-MEN KING-SIZE, our latest giant publication FRIGHT, and the SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION, featuring—aww, why not try to guess?—And all the above stuff is just for starters! Wait'll next month, mister!

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 1, ANÚNCIO INTERNO, JULHO DE 1970

Com arte de Marie Severin, este anúncio de meia-página acendeu a expectaviva em cima da estreia de Conan ao aparecer em todas as publicações Marvel de julho de 1970.



CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 1, ANÚNCIO INTERNO, OUTUBRO DE 1970

A espera finalmente chegava ao fim: a estrela de Conan era alardeada com este anúncio lançado junto à edição 1.



CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 2, ANÚNCIO INTERNO, NOVEMBRO DE 1970

Com arte inédita de Barry Windsor-Smith.

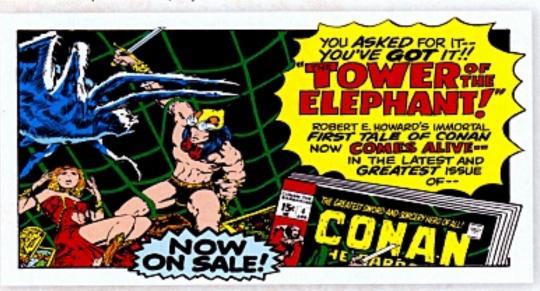


BOLETINS DA REDAÇÃO MARVEL FEVEREIRO DE 1971

ITEM! Speaking of overseas voyagers, BASHFUL BARRY SMITH has finally completed arrangements to emigrate from England and make little old New York his home. We're pleased as punch with this new development, especially since it seems that Barry's newest mag. CONAN THE BARBARIAN, promises to be one of the biggest comic-magazine smash hits of the decade. So who can blame us for not wanting to let this young, talented Britisher out of our sight?

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 4, ANÚNCIO INTERNO, MARÇO DE 1971

Promovendo a primeira adaptação direta de um conto de Robert E. Howard na série.



BOLETINS DA REDAÇÃO MARVEL ABRIL DE 1971

ITEM! Talk about explosive events! Mighty Marvel was the toast of fandom when it presented, for the first time in comic-book form, the mind-staggering adventures of CONAN THE BARBARIAN, greatest of all sword-and-sorcery heroes. But now, another bombshell in answer to an avalanche of requests, and because we wanna do it too, the current issue of CONAN heralds the first of a startling series of adaptations of the immortal Conan tales originally written by ROBERT E. HOWARD himself - creator of the battling Cimmerian! The thriller is "The Tower of the Elephant," earliest in setting of all Conan sages and, if you've savored it in the original, you won't wanna miss seeing how RAS-CALLY ROY and BASHFUL BARRY put it all together. And if you haven't read the R.E.H. original, then a real mind-boggling treat awaits you within the pages of CONAN #4! We kid thee not, by Crom!

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 8, ANÚNCIO INTERNO, AGOSTO DE 1971

Com a versão original da companheira de Conan, Jenna, na arte de Barry Windsor-Smith.



BOLETINS DA REDAÇÃO MARVEL SETEMBRO DE 1971

ITEM! By the time this momentous mention appears in print (we're writing this page on March 1st, months before you'll get to read it). BARRY SMITH should be back in the USA, having returned from his two-year sojourn in merrie old England, land of his birth. While he was there, whipping out his cataclysmic CONAN strips, he also found time to do an illustration for the Beatles' song "Come Together." which will appear in The Second Illustrated Beatles Lyrics. Not bad for a country lad!

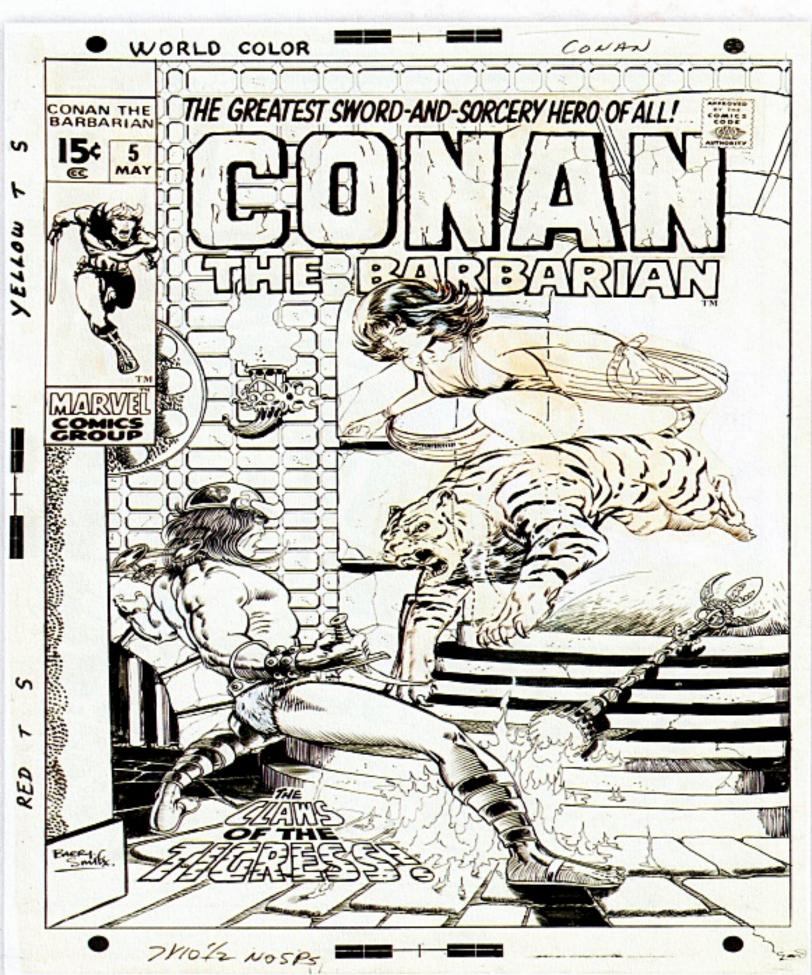
Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Sal Buscema.













CONAN. THE BARBARIAN 5, PÁGINAS 5-6, CÓPIAS FOTOSTÁTICAS DE PRODUÇÃO

Estas raras cópias fotostáticas dos arquivos da Marvel mostram parte da arte de Barry Windsor-Smith à lápis antes de o arte-finalista Frank Giacola completar seu trabalho nas páginas.





well you help us parterian? (" asy shoold I?"

as are only train, not fighton, ... in outpay you well

(" I'll listen!"

Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Frank Giacoia.



"VOU VOAR..." A ERA HIBORIANA DA NOSTALGIA

Uma das experiências mais agradáveis dos meus anos em quadrinhos foi nos primeiros dias de Conan, the Barbarian. O primeiro artista do título, é claro, foi o jovem Barry Smith (hoje Barry Windsor-Smith), que à época residia em sua cidade natal, Londres.

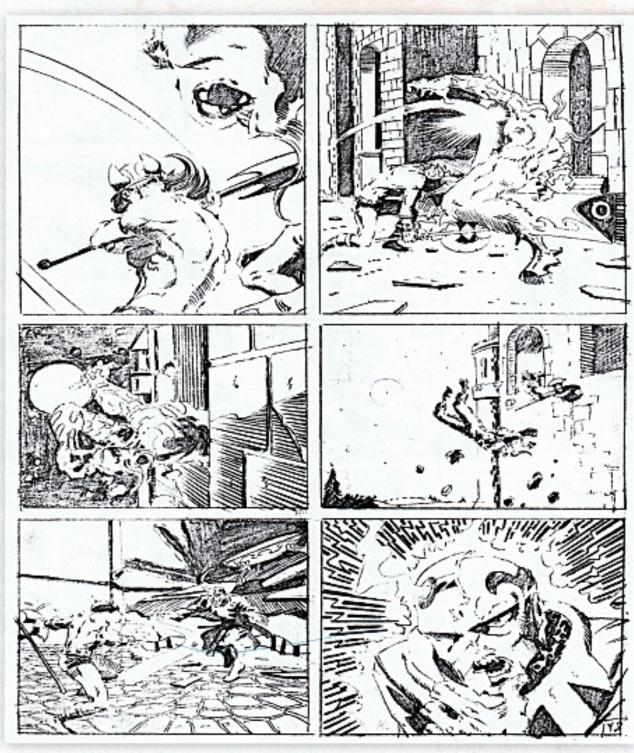
Quando, em 1970, a Marvel adquiriu os direitos de

Conan de Robert E. Howard, as circunstâncias fizeram de Barry a pessoa certa na hora certa — e mesmo no lugar certo, já que não poderíamos nos importar menos se ele desenhasse as histórias em Nova York, na Inglaterra ou em Timbuktu.

A terceira história de Conan que Barry desenhou foi intitulada "Filha de Zukala" — porém, por várias razões, ela acabou aparecendo em Conan 5, trocando de lugar com o conto chamado "O Crepúsculo do Deus Cinzento".

As duas páginas finais de "Filha de Zukala" foram parcialmente reescritas por Barry, antes de serem roteirizadas. Se você quiser ver como eles saíram, confira Conan Saga 2. Vários painéis não se mantiveram inalterados, mas duas grandes alterações foram feitas:

Na página 19, trabalhando a partir do meu enredo (que foi perdido há muito tempo, então não posso verificar exatamente o que pedi para ele desenhar), Barry havia desenhado uma sequência que causou um certo problema. Como você poderá ver na próxima página, Conan corta o demônio Jaggta-Noga com um machado e o derruba pela janela — onde ele cai para sua morte. A questão é que Jaggta-Noga era praticamente indestrutível — e antes, nessa mesma edição, o vimos voando pelo ar. Em uma nota na borda da folha, Barry percebeu o paradoxo inerente, pois escreveu: "Perder o equilíbrio — exausto demais para voar (um pouco forçado, não?)".



Por Barry Windsor Smith.

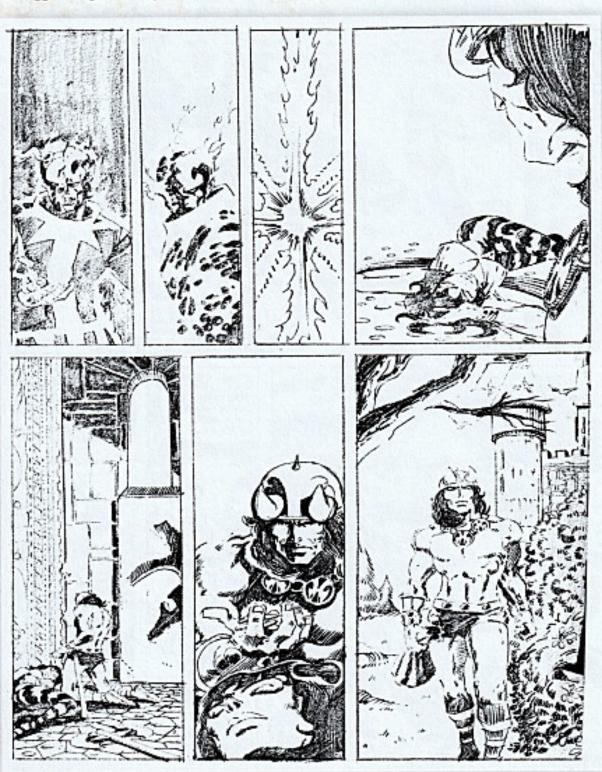
De fato era, e depois de conversarmos brevemente por telefone, Barry desenhou os novos quadros 1 a 4, em que Zukala envia Jaggta-Noga de volta ao seu mundo inferior, do qual ele não voltaria até Conon, the Barbarian 115! Na página 20, Zukala também desaparece — mas na versão original , Barry havia desenhado (e é bem possível que meu roteiro tenha pedido para ele desenhar) Zephra, filha de Zukala, morta pela mão indiscriminada de Jaggta-Noga. Por algum motivo há muito esqueci-

do, decidimos que Zephra deveria viver, de modo que os quadros 4 e 5 foram redesenhados, e sua cabeça sem vida foi apagada do quadro 6.

Quando Conan deixou o Castelo Zukala, ele não sabia que estava destinado a se encontrar novamente com o par em Conon 14-15. Zephra, que finalmente viria a bater as botas no famoso crossover com Elric de Melniboné, de Michael Moorcock, recebeu dez edições a mais da vida, cortesia do hábil lápis de Barry.

> E aqui, pela primeira vez, estão reproduzidos os desenhos daquelas duas páginas de Barry Windsor-Smith de Conan 5 — um pouco da história dos quadrinhos!

> > Jen 1993



























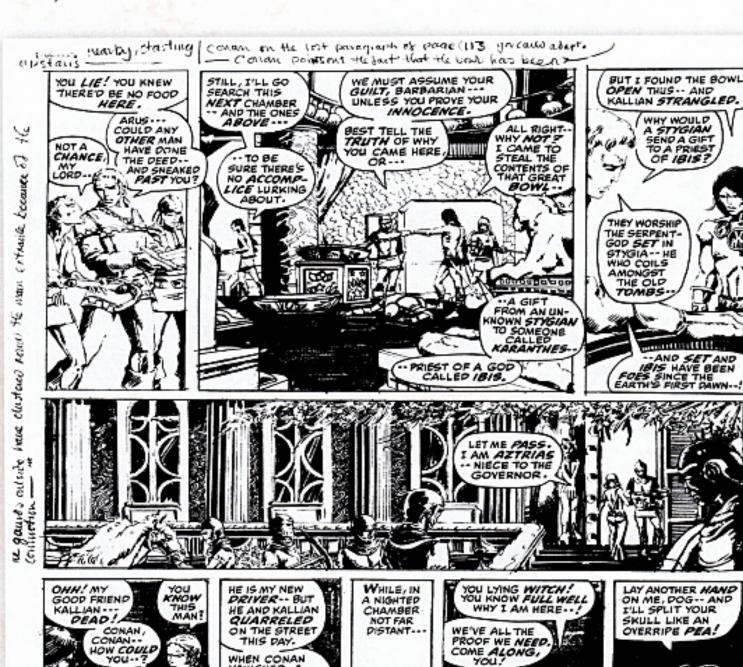














Me sets surprised



" he , he is my charge





wing potch acoust



TUMB IT! (HAT)



Por Barry Windsor-Smith.





684

Por Barry Windsor-Smith.













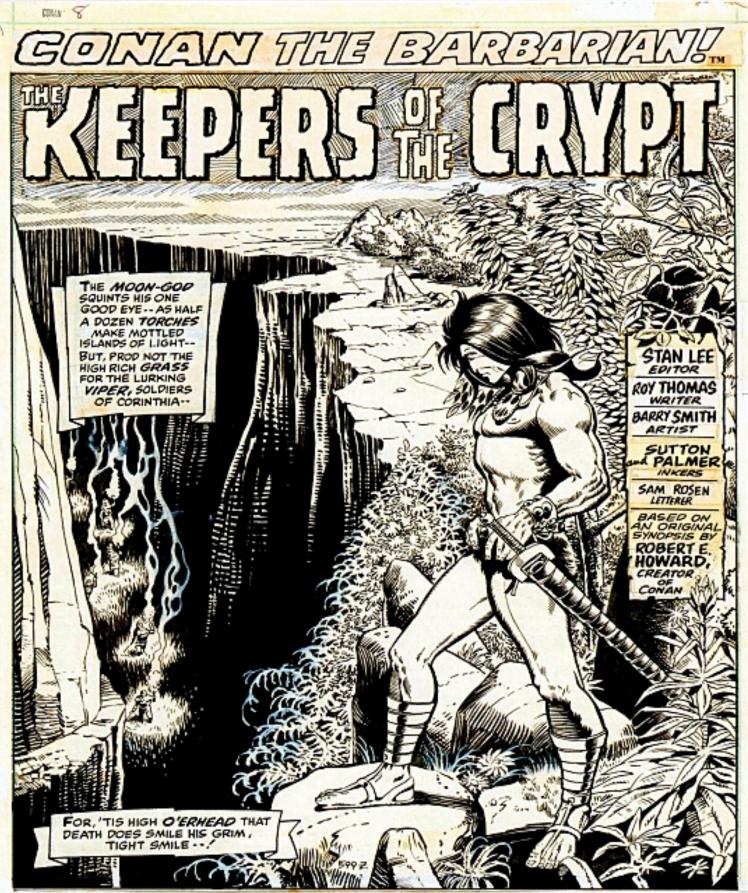
CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 7, PÁGINA 20, ARTE ORIGINAL

Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Sal Buscema.



Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Sal Buscema (com alterações no rosto de Jenna por John Romita).





CONAN THE BARBARIAN is published by MAGAZINE MANAGEMENT CO., INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 625 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022, Published monthly. Copyright (C) 1971 by Magazine Management Co., Inc., Marvel Comics Group, all rights reserved 625 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022, Vol. 1, No. 8, August, 1971 issue. Price 154 per copy. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A. by World Color Press, Inc., Sparta, Illinois 62286. Subscription rate \$2.00 and \$2.50 Canada for 12 issues including postage. Foreign subscriptions \$4.00.

SITTHEONY HEL



THEN, NO PAUSE -- NO BACK-CAST GLANCE -- AS THE YOUNG BARBARIAN STRIPES EASTWARD, TO-WARD THE COMING



ITS BIRTHING GLOW UPON -- A CITY.





6

-- INTO A NAMELESS CITY WHERE TIME SWEEPS SANDS AND MEMORIES THRU THE ROCK-STREWN STREETS...







-- AND WHERE A STONE-GREY GARGOYLE SITS SILENT ATOP A SUN-CRACKEP FOUNTAIN WAITING FOR THE WATER-BEARERS WHO SHALL NEVERMORE COME.









CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 8, PÁGINA 9, ARTE ORIGINAL Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Tom Palmer.



Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Tom Sutton.

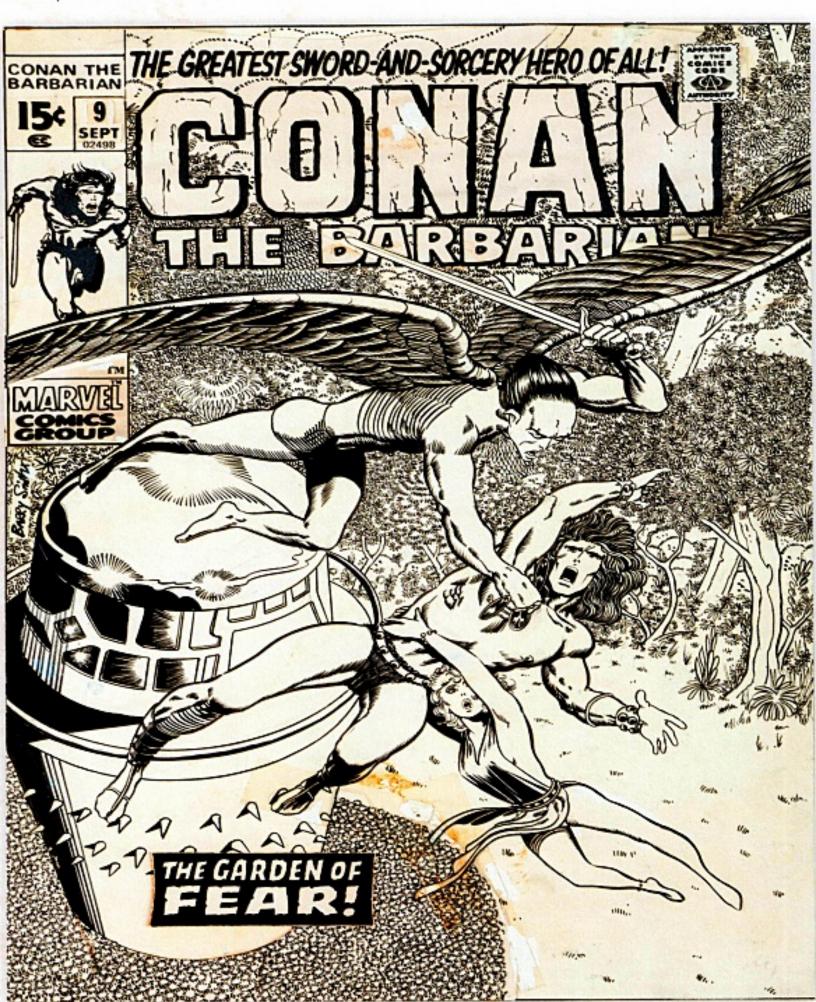


Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Sal Buscema.



Por Barry Windsor-Smith.





Por Barry Windsor-Smith.



CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 10, PÁGINA 16, QUADRO 7, CÓPIAS FOTOSTÁTICAS DE PRODUÇÃO

Esta rara cópa fotostática (esquerda) mostra a versão original do rosto do Sacerdote de Anu, por Barry Windsor-Smith.

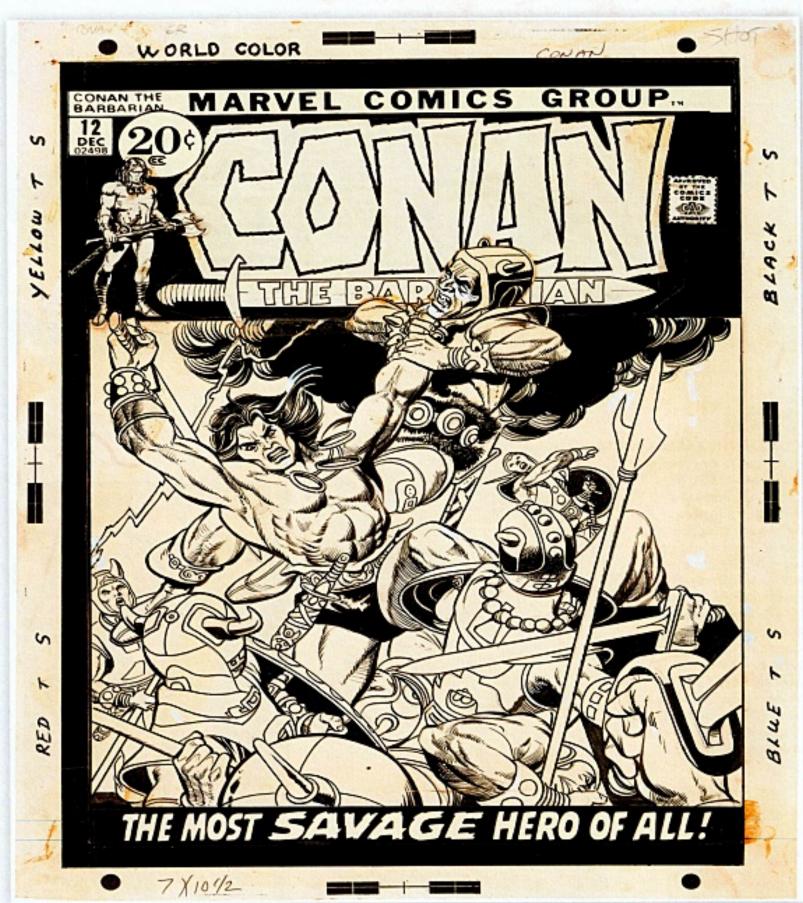


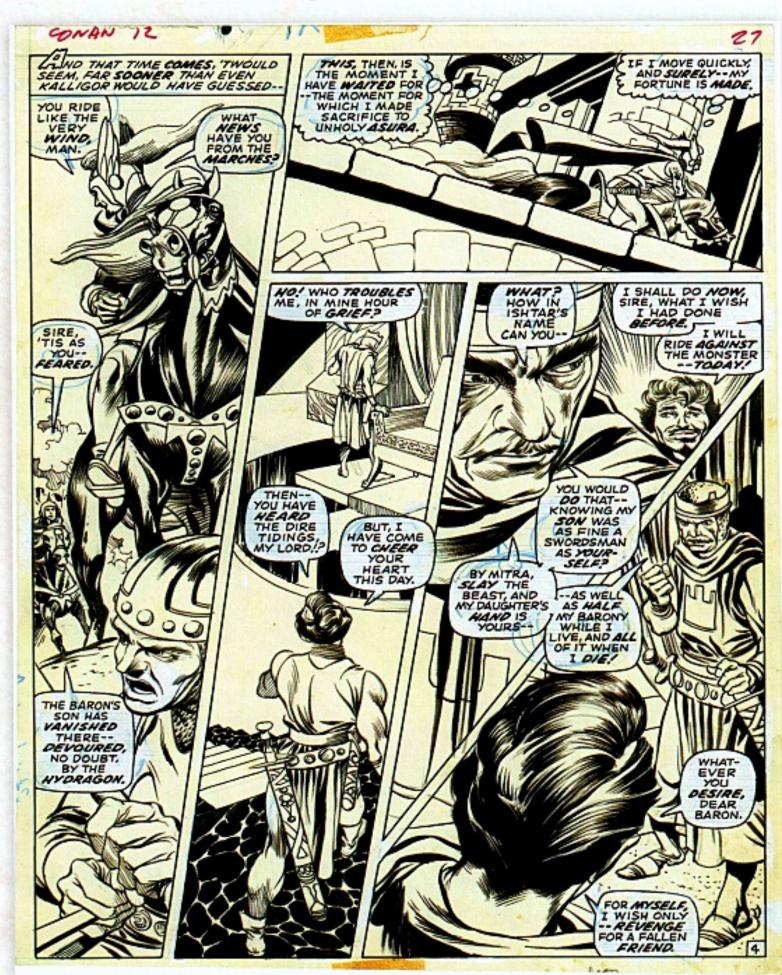
CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 10, PÁGINA 23. QUADRO 7. CÓPIAS FOTOSTÁTICAS DE PRODUÇÃO

O censor do Comics Code exigiu que o final de Conan, the Barbarian 10 fosse alterado porque a edição concluía sem que Conan fosse punido por ter matado os homens que enforcaram seu companheiro, Burgun. Roy Thomas reescreveu o quadro final, para que Conan sentisse dor e vazio em vez de paz, e para antecipar a prisão iminente de Conan na edição 11. Comics Code: "Protegendo" a juventude americana desde 1954!









SAVAGE TALES 4/CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 12, ALTERAÇÕES DO COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

A história "O Habitante das Trevas", originalmente criada para aparecer na publicação adulta preto-e-branca Savage Tales 2, foi engavetada depois de a revista ser cancelada com apenas uma edição. Com a intenção de não desperdiçar o trabalho já completado, a história foi alterada para ser publicada em Conan, the Barbarian 12, com a adição de algumas artes e o deslocamento de alguns balões, para melhor se encaixarem nas dimensões do gibi. Além disso, o Comics Code exigiu alterações na arte e no conteúdo de "Habitante", para que ela recebesse seu obrigatório selo de aprovação. A versão original foi finalmente publicada na ressuscitada Savage Tales 4, quase três anos depois de ser completada.

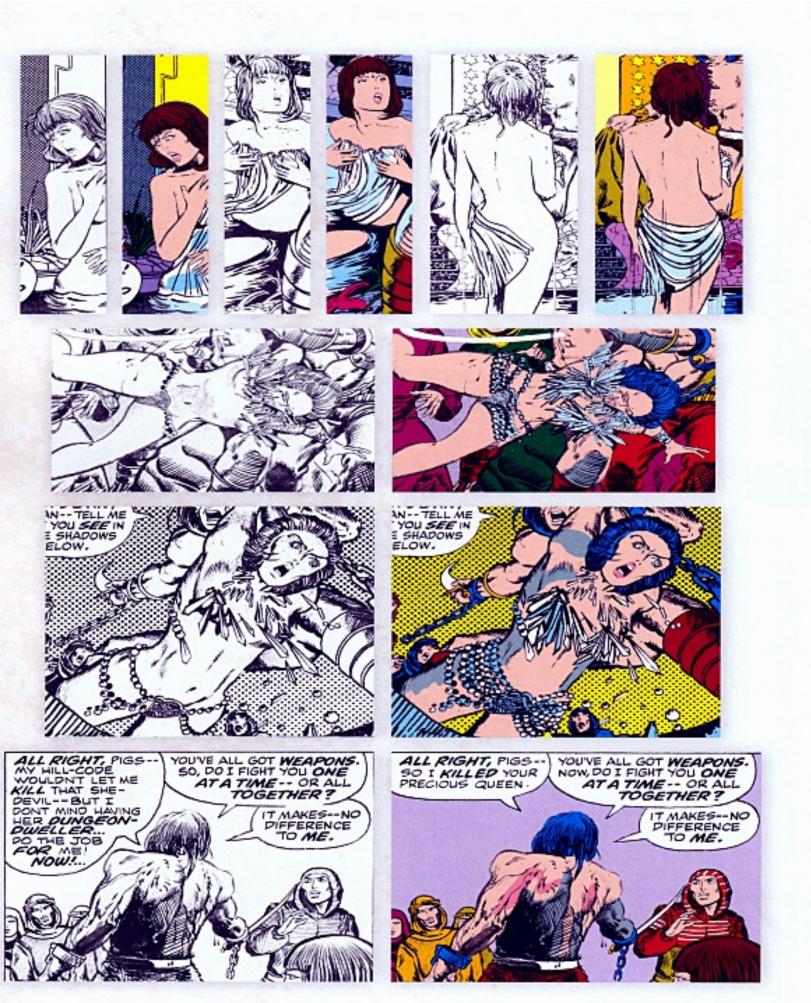


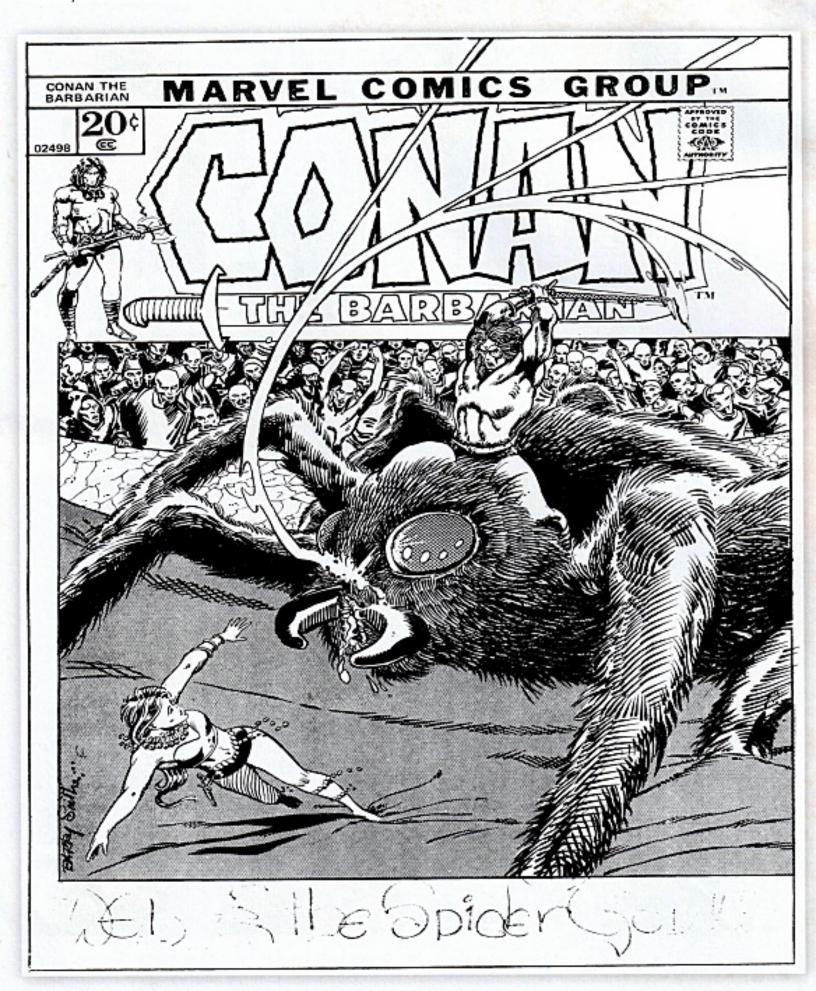












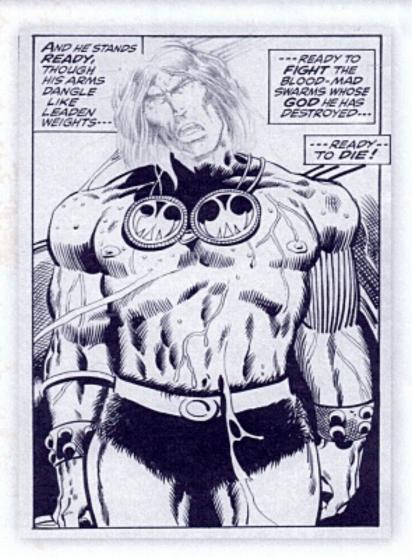
CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 12, PÁGINA 6, QUADRO I (CANTO SUPERIOR ESQUERDO); PÁGINA IÓ, QUADRO 4 (CANTO SUPERIOR DIREITO); PÁGINA I7, QUADRO 2 (CENTRO, À ESQUERDA); E PÁGINA I8, QUADRO 2 (CANTO INFERIOR DIREITO), CÓPIAS FOTOSTÁTICAS Estas são cópias fotostáticas raras dos arquivos da Marvel com a arte original à lápis de Barry Windsor-Smith, sem arte-final. As anotações nas bordas estão ilegíveis; porém, é possível ao menos ler nas três "Sal, não arte-finalize...", o que pode indicar a possibilidade de que Windsor-Smith redesenharia as poses ou faria ele mesmo a arte-final. A arte publicada mantém todas as poses vistas aqui com exceção da página 17, quadro 2, na qual a pose de Conan foi alterada para ficar como visto no canto inferior esquerdo e parece ter sido reproduzida diretamente do lápis de Windsor-Smith.











Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Sal Buscema.

















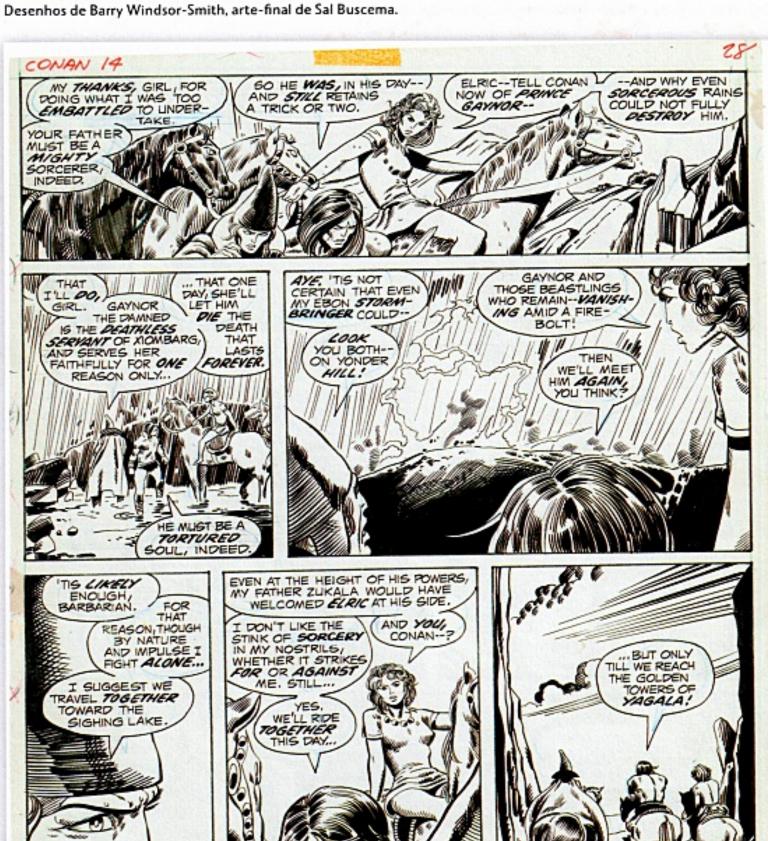








WELL? WHAT SAY YOU BOTH?



Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Sal Buscema e Barry Windsor-Smith.



OFFICE OF THE CODE AUTHORITY

DATE: 2/3/72

L. Darvin

1

Chip Goodman

SUBJECT: Conan The Barbarian #16

I hate to trouble you with these matters, but I believe the attached is of sufficient importance to be brought to your attention.

REFERRED FOR PURPOSE CHECKED:

2. COMMENT & SUGGESTION

2. COMMENT & SUGGESTION

3. INVESTIGATION & REPORT

4. ACKNOWLEDGE ATTACHED

5. LETTER HAS STRACKED

6. SUCH ACTION AS THE FACTS WAY WARRANT 7. PLEASE SEAD COPY OF YOUR REPLY 8. FOR TEAMSWITTEL TO AND CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #16 (July 1972)

Re: Story: "The Prost Giant's Daughter"

This story violates the Code provision: "Nudity in any form is prohibited," and also, "Rape shall never be shown or suggested." As we stated with regard to the first tame submissions of the cover of this book, it could also very well be considered in violation of the statute provisions defining mudity, contained in the so-called "harmful to minors" laws (upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court) in effect in a number of states:

> "!Nudity! means the showing of the human male or female genitals, puble area or buttocks with less than a full opaque covering, or the showing of the female breast with less than a fully opaque covering of any portion thereof below the topm of the nipple, or the depiction of covered male genitals in a descernibly turgid state. (emphasis mine. LD)

In order for the story to be acceptable, the "lightest gossamer draping of the female figure, wherever it is used on the female's breasts, pubic areas or buttocks must be made opaque and to cover these areas thoroughly, in accordance with the above definition, at least. All references in the text indicating that the female is nude or which indicate attempted as intended rape, as well as illustrations showing or indicating seman must be removed. Specifically: same, must be removed. Specifically:

- Remove line above torso drapery, and leg-line going p. 6, p. 4. to crotch.
- (caption) Eliminate: "And she wears naught save a veil of lightest gossamer". P. 6, p. 5.
- Cover brest, and raise lower cloth at least to the P. 6, P. 6. middle of the hip, to definitely erase indication of what appears to be puble hair.
- This ultra sheer drapery must be made opsque (as XX . P. 7. p. 1. all drapery covering breast, pubic area and buttocks must, whether noted specifically in this review or not) and raised above middle of breast.
- P. 7. p. 1. (dialogue) Eliminate: "My ice-pale body."
- P. 7. p. 3. Raise drapery to cover right breast. -

(See page 2)

SAVAGE TALES 1/CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 16, CARTAS E ALTERAÇÕES DO COMICS CODE AUTORITY

Quando a história "A Filha do Gigante de Gelo", de Savage Tales 1, estava marcada para ser publicada em uma versão colorida e aprovada pelo Comics Code em Conan, the Barbarian 16, o Code fez muitos comentários. A história e arte anteriormente classificadas como "para leitores adultos" preocupou tanto o advogado do Code Len Darvin que ele enviou um memorando ao Publisher da Marvel Chip Goodman. O assistente editorial (e mais tarde roteirista-chefe) Steve Englehart guardou o memorando, e pôde nos permitir um vislumbre detalhado das objeções e mudanças do órgão.



OBS: Os números de página no memorando se referem às páginas de Conon, the Borbarion 16 incluindo as propagandas, não apenas as páginas de história.

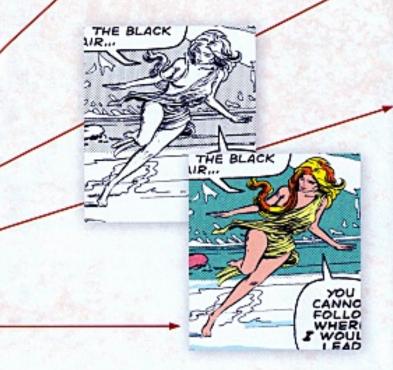
- · pg. 6 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 5
- pg. 7 no memorando =
 CTB16, pg. 6





THE WOMAN'S BODY IS LIKE
IVORY... AND SAVE FOR A
VEIL OF LIGHTEST GOSSAMER,
SHE IS NAKED AS THE DAY,
HER VOICE IS SWEETER THAN
THE RIPPLING OF SILVERY
FOUNTAINS... YET TINGED
WITH CRUEL MOCKERY.

THE WOMAN'S BODY IS LIKE
IVORY... AND SHE WEARS
A VEIL OF GLEAMING
GOSSAMER.
HER VOICE IS SWEETER THAN
THE RIPPLING OF SILVERY
FOUNTAINS... YET TINGED
WITH CRUEL MOCKERY.







SAVAGE TALES 1/CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 16, CARTAS E ALTERAÇÕES DO COMICS CODE AUTORITY (CONTINUAÇÃO)

RAGE SHAKES CONAN'S

SOUL...

RAGE, AND DESIRE FOR THE
WHITE FIGURE WHOSE
TAUNTING LAUGHTER
MAKES HIS PULSE TO
HAMMER IN HIS
TEMPLES...

RAGE SHAKES CONAN'S
SOUL...
RAGE, AND LONGING FOR THE
WHITE FIGURE WHOSE
TAUNTING LAUGHTER
MAKES HIS PULSE TO
HAMMER IN HIS
TEMPLES...







ACIMA: - pg. 8 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 7, quadros 1 (acima, centro) e 3 (acima, direita)

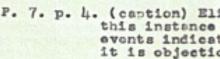
ESQUERDA: - pg. 8 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 7, quadro 4

CONAN THE BARBARIAN # 16









P. 8. p. 4. Drape puble

P. S. p. 5.Raise drapery

P. 10. p. 2. Opsque dray

P. MX 10. p.2. (dialogue in view o now stend

P. 10. p. 4. Enlarge and opaque bress

P. 11, p. 2. Opaque drap of breasts.

P. 11. p. 5. Enlarge drap buttocks.

P. 11, p. 6 . (dialogue) warm you, won

P. 12. p. 1. (dialogue) E

P. 12. p. 2. Change postu Gonan's arms the bodies, rape. Also

P. 12. p.3. (caption) "T of the above

P. 12. p. 4. Drape breas



À DIREITA E ABAIXO: - pg. 10 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 8, quadro 2













OBS: Os números de página no memorando se referem às páginas de Conon, the Borborion 76 <u>incloindo</u> as propagandas, não apenas as páginas de história.

- + pg. 7 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 6
- pg. 8 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 7
- pg. 10 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 8
- pg. 11 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 9
- · pg. 12 no memorando = CIB16, pg. 10
- · pg. 14 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 11





A ESQUERDA: - pg. 11 no memorando =
C1B16. pg. 9. quadro 5

BUT, I'LL
WARM YOU,
WOMAN-WOMAN-
WOMAN-
--WITH THE FIRE
OF MY OWN
BLOOD!





minate "desire". This is requested in because when taken in context with ing attempted rape later in the story,

and BEESX breast areas.

on right breast.

ts.

ery, eliminating "see through" lines.

). Suggest eliminating the word "harlot", of general context of sex, as the story is.

raise lower drapery to cover buttock and at covering to eliminate "see through" lines.

ery and eliminate "see through lines" Enlarge drapery over right breast.

cry extensively to cover breast and

Pliminate: REXEXEMENTED "But I'll un." (In context, suggestion of rape.)

liminate: "with the fire of my own blood." (same reason as above.)

res and relationship of figures--removing around her, HEEK putting some space between etc.--to avoid suggestion of attempted drspe female to cover buttock.

he girl slips from Conan's Arms, because, must be changed to something like "sway".

ABAIXO: - pg. 12 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 10, quadros 2-4















- P. 12. p. 5. Enlarge drapery to cover buttocks and show drapery to indicate that there is breast covering.
- P. 12. p.6. Cover breasts, buttock and pubic areas extensively beyond present illustration.
- P. 14. p. 1. Drape breast and pubic areas. (As it is now, this figure appears completely nude.)
- P. 14. p. 2. Drape breast and pubic areas.

NOTE: PLEASE RETURN ORIGINAL BOARDS TO CODE AUTHORITY OFFICE WHEN CORRECTED, FOR APPROVAL.

CORTESIA DE STEVE ENGLEMART

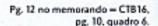


OBS: Os números de página no memorando se referem às páginas de Conan, the Borbarian 16 <u>incluindo</u> as propagandas, não apenas as páginas de história.

- pg. 12 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 10
- pg. 14 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 11

Pg. 12 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 10, quadro 5.



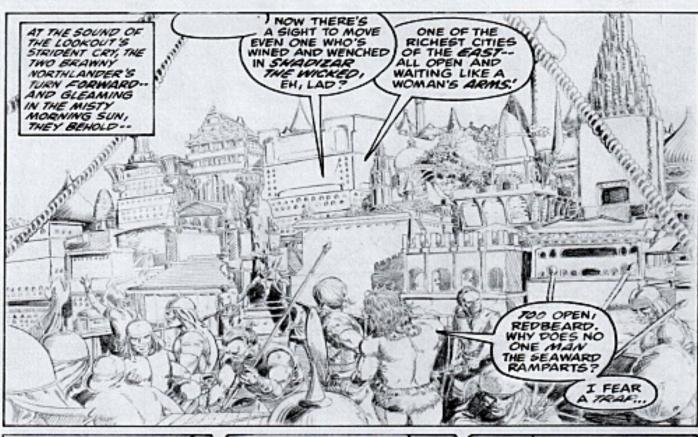




Pg. 14 no memorando = CTB16, pg. 11, quadro 1. Nenhuma mudança foi feita ao quadro 2.

Desenhos de Gil Kane, arte-final de Dan Adkins.

















Desenhos de Barry Windsor-Smith, arte-final de Val Mayerik, P. Craig Russell e Sal Buscema.



14

CONAN, THE BARBARIAN 24, PÁGINAS 1-3, ARTE INALTERADA (ACIMA) E ARTE PUBLICADA (ABAIXO)

Mais uma vez, o Comics Code atingiu *Conon,* exigindo uma toalha maior em Sonja no quadro 1 e que as mãos de Conan fossem reposicionadas acima da água no quadro 3.





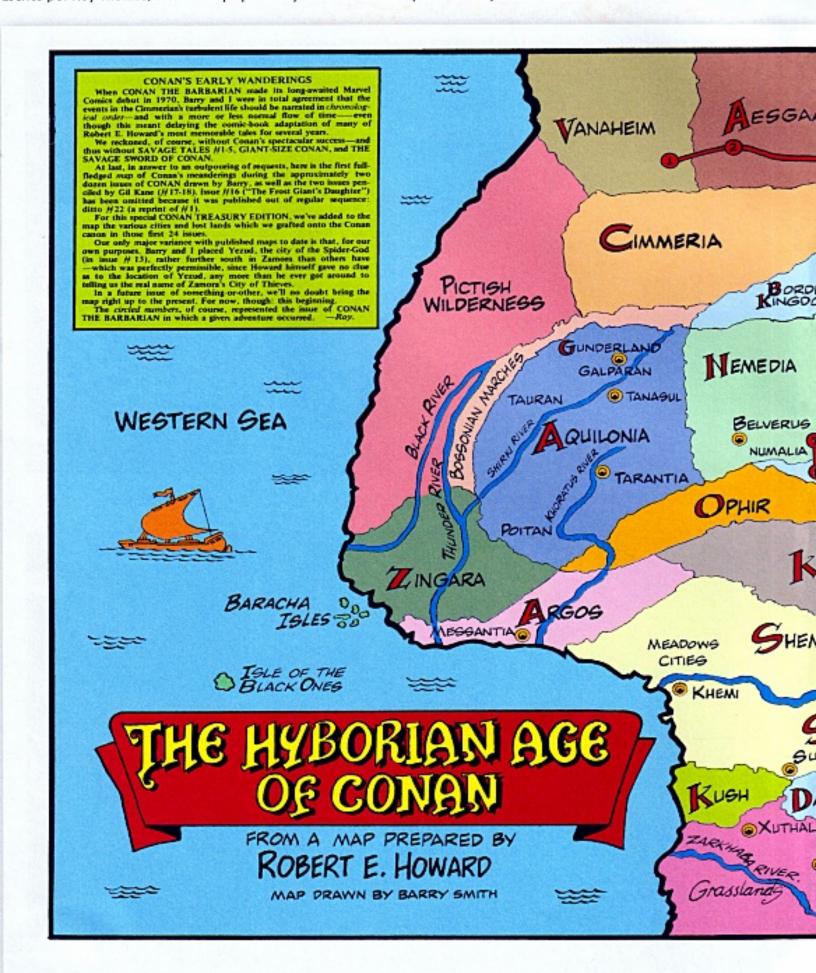


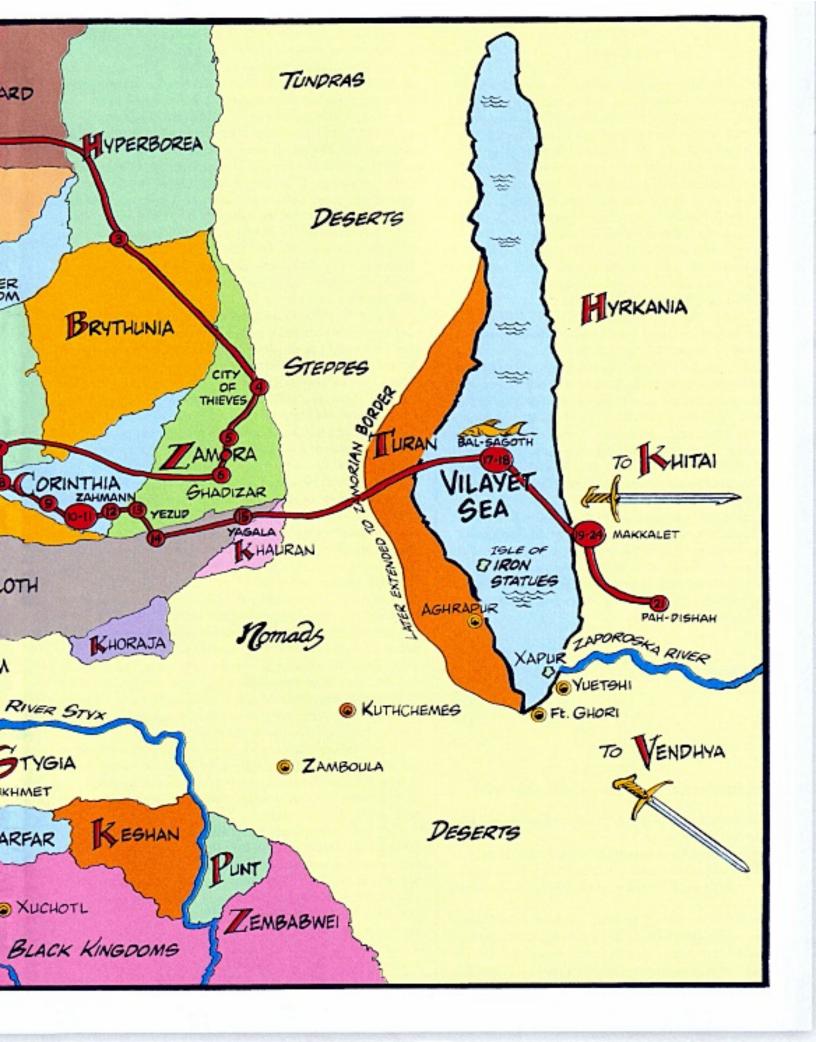






Escrito por Roy Thomas; arte do mapa por Barry Windsor-Smith a partir do mapa de Robert E. Howard.





THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN THE BARBARIAN VOL. 1 (1978).

COMPILANDO: Conan the Barbarian 1-3

PREFÁCIO: Stan Lee

INTRODUÇÃO: Roy Thomas (Tradução de Fernando Bertacchini)

PREFÁCIO POR STAN LEE

Conan! Talvez seja este o mais selvagem e dramático de todos os aventureiros! Conan! Quiçá, o mais inigualável herói de espada & magia da literatura modernal Conan! Possivelmente, o mais destemido e deslumbrante guerreiro de uma era anterior à História, e de um mundo perdido nos anais do tempo!

Quem criou esse fantástico personagem foi Robert E. Howard, um jovem escritor texano capaz de conceder vida a uma lenda, e glória à sanguinolência. E quem o verteu para os quadrinhos foi a Marvel Comics. Sob a égide literária de Roy Thomos, a Casa das Ideias materializou o bárbaro de Howard em forma de arte sequencial. Assim, nós o apresentamos e o revelamos a toda uma nova geração de leitores, produzindo as faíscas que viriam a incendiar o renascimento do culto denominado Conan da Ciméria!

Como explicar esse fascínio cada vez maior pelo violento aventureiro da Era Hiboriana? Por que ele conquistou tamanha legião, ou melhor, tamanho exército de fãs? Seja qual for a razão, uma coisa é certa: justificativas simplistas e lógica rasa jamais poderão nos fornecer a resposta. Seria fácil demais dizer que as pessoas são cativadas pela aura de violência ou pelo semblante de selvageria. Nada disso, os motivos são muito mais profundos e complexos. Talvez seja a atmosfera de magia, a sensação de encantamento, a descoberta de uma alma nobre no cerne de um corpo bestial... ou talvez todos esses elementos, somados a muitos outros, possam explicar parcialmente o fenômeno que se tornou o Conan.

Enfim, quaisquer que sejam as razões, o prazer será todo seu. Nas páginas a seguir, você há de se deleitar com as emoções eletrizantes de aventuras épicas em um passado imemorial: a era de Conan, o Poderoso; Conan, o Vingador; Conan, o Libertino! Mas, além e acima de tudo, prepare-se para vibrar intensamente com a monumental saga — como somente a Marvel é capaz de produzir — de Conan, o Bárbaro!

Excelsion

INTRODUÇÃO Por Roy Thomas, roteirista e editor original.

Já dizia Shakespeare: "A peça é a coisa, eu sei, com a qual

apanharei a consciência do rei."

Porém, no maravilhoso mundo da fantasia, cabe sempre às ideias a supremacia sobre tudo e todos. Foi o caso do bárbaro Conan desde os primórdios de suas publicações. Raciocine comigo:

A ideia: Em 1932, Robert E. Howard, um jovem escritor texano, ansiava vender uma série de aventuras impetuosas à Weird Tales, a lendária revista pulp que apresentou ao universo literário diversos autores hoje igualmente lendários como H.P. Lovecraft, só para citar um deles. Entretanto, como estampava seu título, Contos "Bizarros" era um periódico que só publicava histórias de horror ou de caráter sobrenatural. A fim de atender a esses critérios editoriais, Howard concebeu a brilhante ideia de fundir em suas aventuras elementos dos contos de Harold Lamb, Rafael Sabatini, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Lovecraft e outros autores aclamados pelos leitores da Weid Tales. Assim, o novato do Texas criou o incrível amálgama denominado Conan da Ciméria.

A ideia: Em 1950, os contos de Conan republicados em caprichadas compilações de capa dura por uma pequena editora de literatura fantástica estavam quase esgotados. Preocupado, o editor contratou L. Sprague de Camp, um celebrado autor de fantasia, para incumbi-lo de converter em histórias do guerreiro bárbaro diversos contos de Robert E. Howard protagonizados por outros personagens. Portanto, graças a uma grande ideia, de Camp tornou-se instrumental para levar o Cimério a uma coleção de edições em capa cartonada que, pela primeira vez, rendeu à criação de REH o enorme contingente de leitores que ela tanto merecia.

A ideia: Por volta de 1968, milhares de leitores da Marvel Comics assolaram nossa Redação com cartas clamando por adaptações em quadrinhos de romances estrelados por heróis épicos. Dentre os personagens mais requisitados, destacava-se um certo Conan da Ciméria. Eu e meu editor-chefe, Stan Lee, sabíamos identificar uma "onda popular" quando estávamos diante de uma, portanto, logo me empenhei na zelosa tarefa de ler as aventuras do bárbaro aventureiro e de outros personagens claramente criados para imitá-lo. Creio que aquele momento seja comparável a um tipo de revelação divina, pois, até hoje, as histórias do Cimério me deleitam mais do que nunca! Meu vinculo particular com esse personagem já dura quase uma década, tendo rendido cerca de três mil páginas de quadrinhos publicados em quase todos os formatos, estruturas e dimensões possíveis! Só para constar, são mais páginas do que o próprio Howard, de Camp e todos os seus imitadores, somados, já conseguiram escrever!

A Ideia: Uma vez que tantos e tantos marvelmoniacos foram conhecendo e acompanhando nossos títulos Conan, o Bárbaro e A Espada Selvagem de Conan (The Savage Sword of Conan) ao longo dos anos que se passaram desde a estreia quadrinística do personagem em 1970, a Marvel Comics e a editora Ace/Tempo Books tiveram a ideia de produzir uma coleção especial republicando a fase inicial da série. Cada volume reúne três números e o projeto original prevê outros cinco ou seis volumes— a menos que todos erremos feio em nossa previsão coletiva de sucesso.

Devo, contudo, fazer uma pequena confissão: uma vez que as histórias em quadrinhos são visualmente planejadas e diagramadas para um formato diferente de livros em brochura, esta reedição nos obrigou a recortar e adaptar vários quadros. Um processo imperfeito, eu admito, mas inevitável.

Seja como for, acredito sinceramente que o poder bruto do conceito original de Robert E. Howard — bem como o entusiasmo e o esmero conferidos a estes quadrinhos pelo nosso ilustrador britânico Barry Smith e por este escriba (ao menos, assim espero) — ainda é capaz de entusiasmar, divertir e revigorar qualquer leitor, exatamente como tem sido nos quase 100 números até hoje publicados de Conan, o Bárbaro.

Sem dúvida, nossos primórdios foram inebriantes para Barry e seu editor / roteirista. Em pouco tempo, Conan se tornou uma publicação contemplada com quase todos os prêmios oferecidos aos profissionais do ramo dos quadrinhos, tanto pela crítica especializada quanto pelos fãs. Clória maior, só mesmo a de manter vivo o nome e a fama do grande herói de REH durante um período relativamente longo (na verdade, vários anos), no qual as compilações dos contos originais estiveram fora de catálogo nos Estados Unidos. Felizmente, essa lacuna editorial foi devidamente sanada, portanto, todos os leitores que se encantarem com esta reedição do Conan da Marvel já estão convidados a se deleitar, em seguida, com a intensa prosa de Howard para o guerreiro Cimério. Afinal, os contos estão novamente disponíveis em livros publicados pela editora Ace Books.

Agora, pelo bem dos leitores que só se animaram a conhecer Conan nesta coleção especial, ou mesmo daqueles que precisam ou apenas gostariam de "refrescar suas memórias", permita-me tecer alguns comentários a respeito do panorama e da ambientação destas narrativas.

De acordo com Robert E. Howard, existiu na pré-história (cerca de 12 milênios atrás) deste mundo uma época gloriosa: a Era Hiboriana. Nesse período, situado entre a submersão da fabulosa Atlântida e a aurora da história registrada nos anais egípcios e mesopotâmicos, reinos esplendorosos espalharam-se pelo mundo tal qual miriades de estrelas sob o firmamento. Os maiores e mais poderosos eram Aguilônia, Nemédia e Hirkânia, três nações lendárias que teriam existido onde, hoje, estão situados países como França, Alemanha e Rússia.

Porém, ao norte, havia terras ocupadas por povos mais primitivos, até mesmo selvagens, como a Ciméria (correspondente à atual Dinamarca). Os cimérios, entretanto, não habitavam sozinhos naquela porção inóspita do planeta. Nas paragens glaciais ainda mais ao norte, figuravam a mística Hiperbórea e as indomáveis nações de Vanaheim e Asgard - a qual preferimos renomear como "Aesgaard", só para evitar confusões com Asgard, o reino dos deuses nórdicos dos quadrinhos do Poderoso Thor.

A maior parte dos cimérios ficaria feliz se passasse a vida inteira em seu montanhoso, sombrio, nebuloso e melancólico território em sua existência perpetuamente flagelada por intermináveis guerras de fronteira contra tudo e todos.

Exceto por um jovem chamado Conan!

Ainda jovem, Conan decidiu partir de sua terra natal. Iniciou suas andanças pelo próprio norte, para depois seguir em direção ao sul e ao clima bem mais ameno dos reinos hiborianos, em busca de aventura — e riquezas. Com o tempo, se tornou um ladrão, mais tarde um mercenário e até mesmo general. E, no início de sua guarta década de vida, tornou-se o rei usurpador da decadente e civilizada Aquilônia.

Mas essa é uma história ainda distante.

Nas páginas a seguir, você está prestes a conhecer um jovem e já furioso guerreiro, mas ainda um tanto canhestro como espadachim. Passaram-se poucos meses desde seu batismo de fogo em batalha, em um lugar chamado Venarium. Ele perambulou até o norte, onde aceitou aliar-se aos aesires (de Aesgaard) em sua eterna guerra com os vanires (de Vanaheim). Embora não favoreca nenhum dos lados do conflito, e nem ao menos goste de ambos os povos, é uma maneira de ganhar a vida.

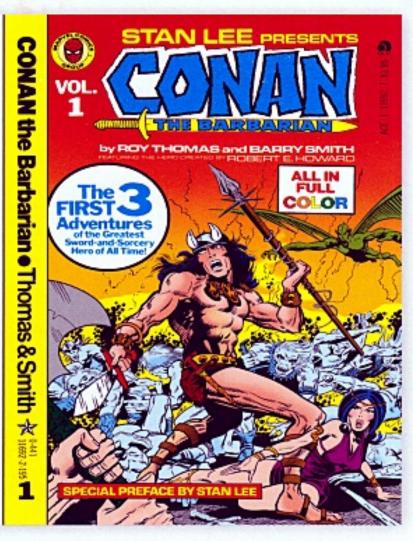
Sem mais delongas, temos a alegria de convidá-lo a ler (ou reler) os primórdios de uma das mais fascinantes publicações da Marvel Comics: a saga de Conan, o Bárbaro!



HE GRIM GREY GOD







THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN THE BARBARIAN VOL. 2 (1978).

COMPILANDO: Conan the Barbarian 4-6

INTRODUÇÃO: Roy Thomas (Tradução de Fernando Bertacchini)

Com seu estilo peculiar, Conan, o Bárbaro sagrou-se um dos mais duradouros fenômenos do universo quadrinístico na década de 1970, e não há indício de que seu furor esteja a caminho de uma curva descendente.

O pioneiro gibi em cores da Marvel estrelado pelo herói de espada & magia criado por Robert E. Howard ganhou vida no verão de 1970. Portanto, quase quatro décadas desde a estreia do Cimério nas páginas da literatura pulp da década de 1930, mas apenas três anos depois de sua chegada aos populares livros produzidos com papel barato e capa cartonada, que haviam tomado de assalto as bancas e livrarias dos Estados Unidos.

Quase imediatamente, os consumidores de histórias em quadrinhos – um público que, há muito tempo, deixou de ser limitado a crianças ou pessoas mentalmente não desenvolvidas - perceberam estar diante de algo muito especial. Afinal, apesar de sua triunfante edição de lançamento, Conon, o Bárbaro amargou um breve período vendendo cada vez menos, mas conseguiu reverter o nebuloso cenário. Contrariando todas as perspectivas de cancelamento, a revista iniciou uma lucrativa escalada até ingressar na prestigiada galeria dos títulos mais vendidos da Marvel, além de um sucesso sem precedentes para a crítica especializada.

Estava claro para meus colegas profissionais, também, que este era o surgimento de algo novo. A recém-fundada Academia de Artes e Histórias em Quadrinhos, composta pelos maiores roteiristas e desenhistas do ramo, indicou o segundo número de Conan ao prêmio de melhor história publicada em 1970, e no ano seguinte, outras duas edições foram indicadas entre as melhores do ano: nossa adaptação do conto de Howard A Torre do Elefonte, e Asas Demoníacas Sobre Shadizar, uma aventura original, ambas complicada neste volume. Posteriormente, em 1973, outra de nossas produções originais viria a ganhar o tão cobiçado prêmio.

A série em si teve ainda mais sucesso.

Conan, o Bárbaro foi indicada por quase todos os cinco anos de existência da Academia ao prêmio de melhor revisto em quodrinhos do ano - um triunfo ainda mais notável levando-se em conta que o universo quadrinístico da época desfrutava um período de prosperidade, talento e criatividade insuperável,

ao menos nas duas últimas décadas. (A revista venceu o prêmio de melhor série em 1972.)

A propósito, eu e Barry também recebemos prêmios individuais... mas não me parece necessário prolongar esse assunto, então vamos em frente.

Antes de 1970, espada & magia era um gênero raras vezes visto nas páginas coloridas de um gibi. Quando, muito ocasionalmente, alguma editora tentava investir nessa linha, os fãs de quadrinhos fugiam de tais publicações como se elas fossem a peste bubônica. Graças ao Cimério, a espada & magia conseguiu, enfim, ser aceita no rol de gêneros e temas capazes de render revistas em quadrinhos populares e campeãs de vendas. Uma categoria que, até então, parecia ser restrita (na década de 1960) aos super-heróis, caubóis, monstros e aventuras sobre a 2* Guerra Mundial.

Mais do que popularizar seu gênero, Conan desencadeou uma pequena revolução: a Marvel decidiu produzir novas séries em cores protagonizadas por outras criações de Howard como o Rei Kull e a guerreira Sonja. Além disso, o Cimério ainda seria, em breve, o protagonista de quadrinhos em preto e branco e formato magazine.

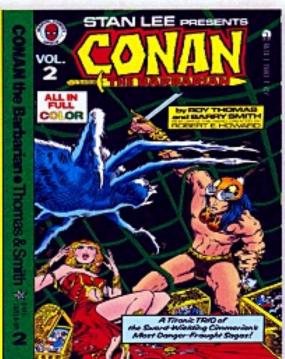
Mas este é um assunto reservado a algum outro volume de The Complete Marvel Conan the Barbarian.

Agora, em prol dos não iniciados (que talvez nem tenham adquirido os volumes 1 e 3 desta publicação), quero deixar algumas palavras a respeito de nosso intempestivo aventureiro e sobre sua vida até o momento em que se iniciam as narrativas aqui reunidas (nesta reimpressão de Conan 4-6):

Conan é um bárbaro nascido em pleno campo de batalha na Ciméria, um país situado (por volta do ano 10.000 a.C.) na área hoje ocupada pela Dinamarca - você pode conferir a posição geográfica no mapa da Era Hiboriana de Howard. Quando somava 15 ou 16 anos de idade (a exemplo das histórias a seguir), sua estatura já superava 1,80 m e ele pesava mais de 90 kg... embora ainda estivesse em fase de crescimento.

Conan foi capturado e escravizado pelos hiperbóreos, um dos povos com os quais os cimérios viviam em eterno conflito. Ele conseguiu sobreviver e escapar de seus captores e, em seguida, rumou para o civilizado, mas corrupto reino de Zamora. Ali, arriscaria a sorte caçando riquezas em Arenjun, a lendária Cidade dos Ladrões. É nesse ponto que Howard situou seus contos cronologicamente mais "antigos", nos quais começava a desvendar os primórdios do Cimério. Este segundo volume de nossa coleção começa nesse mesmo período.





THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN THE BARBARIAN VOL. 3 (1978).

COMPILANDO: Conan the Barbarian 7-9

INTRODUÇÃO: Roy Thomas (Tradução de Fernando Bertacchini)

Bern-vindo ao terceiro volume de The Complete Marvel Conan the Barbarian!

Se você está lendo este prefácio (e sei que está), é bem possível que já tenha adquirido os volumes 1 e 2 desta coleção. Afinal, as três edições foram lançadas na mesma data. Nas duas primeiras, republicamos os números 1 a 6 de Conan, o Bárbaro e, nesta, reapresentamos as edições 7 a 9.

Hoje, para variar um pouco, não vou me aprofundar em comentários a respeito de Robert E. Howard, um dos maiores escritores de fantasia deste ou de qualquer outro século. Também não quero dedicar a maior parte deste espaço à mais celebrada criação de Howard: Conan da Ciméria. Em vez de enaltecer ainda mais o criador e sua criatura, desta vez eu gostaria de dedicar algumas linhas a dois homens muito relevantes. Sem eles, talvez o Conan jamais tivesse chegado aos quadrinhos que lhe valeram tão estrondoso sucesso nesta década de 1970.

Meu primeiro destaque é um jovem texano chamado Glenn Lord. Agente literário da Fundação Robert E. Howard, Glenn sempre nos agraciou com suas cordiais permissões, sem as quais nunca teria existido nenhum quadrinho de Conan, Sonja, Kull ou de qualquer outro personagem howardiano. Permita-me relembrar essa história...

No final da década de 1960, em alguns de seus eruditos prefácios para os livros de bolso que compilavam os contos do Cimério, o autor de ficção científica e fantasia L. Sprague de Camp — o mesmo que, até hoje, escreve um volume considerável de histórias novas do Conan — fez questão de mencionar uma série de editores independentes de compêndios e fanzines dedicados ao bárbaro hiboriano e sua ilustre estirpe. Dentre os nomes citados figurava o de Glenn Lord, cujo endereço de Camp gentilmente divulgou.

Na época, eu era um editor associado na Marvel Comics e vinha tentando descobrir algum meio de adquirir os direitos de publicação de Conan para a editora (e para minha própria diversão como roteirista), por isso enviei uma carta ao Glenn. Pouco depois, ele entrou em contato comigo revelando-se tão disposto quanto ansioso para ver o Cimério alcançando o novo (e ainda maior) contingente de leitores. Não demorou para que um acordo fosse forjado.

Ao longo dos anos decorridos desde então, Glenn tem sido um grande patrono (mesmo sem receber a merecida reverência) de todas as publicações Marvel relacionadas a REH. Além de forne-

cer diversos contos antes desconhecidos de Howard (para serem convertidos em aventuras nos quadrinhos), ele sempre me ajuda a localizar tudo que for preciso da mitologia e dos cânones do Cimério. Enfim, Lord empenha todos os esforços humanamente possíveis para ser útil, portanto, achei que já estava mais do que na hora de lhe conceder o devido crédito.

Muito obrigado, Glenn. Sem você, nada disso seria possível.

Uma vez assegurados os direitos autorais, logo surgiu o segundo individuo de suma importância para o êxito dos primórdios do Gigante de Bronze na Marvel: o artista Barry Smith — que hoje usa seu sobrenome completo, Windsor-Smith, e prefere trabalhar com pinturas sob encomenda.

Embora até tivesse passado alguns meses em nossa Redação em Nova York, onde ilustrou as proezas de heróis como Demolidor e Vingadores, Barry residia em sua terra natal, a Inglaterra. Eu já vinha trocando cartas com ele, nas quais estudávamos a possibilidade de produzir juntos algum projeto de espada & magia. Nesse periodo, Barry me enviou diversas ilustrações exuberantes de personagens bárbaros similares ao Conan, e elas me deixaram empolgado e ansioso para, cedo ou tarde, trabalhar com ele nesse tipo de empreitada. Quando o diretor editorial da Marvel vetou (por razões econômicas) o primeiro desenhista (John Buscema) escalado para desenhar o gibi do Cimério, eu recorri alegremente ao Barry.

Ainda que tenha sido nossa segunda opção, o talentoso britânico logo provou, sem sombra de dúvida, que nem por isso ele teria de ser um artista inferior! Em seus poucos anos de trabalho regular em Conan, ele desenvolveu e aprimorou um estilo artístico que tornava quase injusto chamá-lo só de "desenhista". A arte detalhista e rebuscada de Barry Smith será sempre uma obra digna de ser lembrada, debatida e apreciada.

Muito obrigado a você também, Barry. Foi uma jornada impecável.

Agora, antes que você inicie sua incursão na Era Hiboriana de Robert E. Howard, por volta do ano 10.000 a.C., nossa habitual introdução:

O bárbaro Conan, nasceu na montanhosa Ciméria, um país no extremo norte de seu mundo. Quando resolveu abandonar sua terra natal para enveredar-se rumo aos reinos do sul, ele não passava de um jovem corpulento e um intempestivo espadachim. Como visto nos volumes 1 e 2 desta coleção, a vida errante o levou primeiro à Cidade dos Ladrões, em Zamora; depois à capital do mesmo reino, Shadizar, a Perversa.

Logo após a aventura intitulada Asos Demoníacos sobre Shadizar, o Cimério viaja para o leste pela fabulosa Estrada dos Reis. Seu pretenso destino é um dos mais poderosos e civilizados reinos hiborianos: Nemédia. Mas, no meio do caminho, situa-se a nação vizinha de Coríntia, onde o encontramos nas páginas a seguir... e onde ele encontrará uma das mais aterradoras ameacas de sua vida!

1978

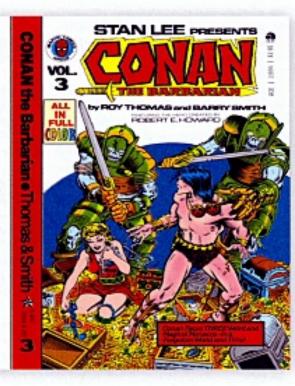
From Nemedia to the Valley of Mammoths, the Mighty-Thewed Cimmerian Battles Time-Lost Monsters and Powerful Wizards!

THE THIRD VOLUME OF THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN FEATURING:

THE LURKER WITHIN
THE KEEPERS OF THE CRYPT
THE GARDEN OF FEAR







THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN THE BARBARIAN VOL. 4 (1978).

COMPILANDO: Conan the Barbarian 10-11

INTRODUÇÃO: Roy Thomas (Tradução de Fernando Bertacchini)

Meses atrás, a Ace Books e a Marvel Comics uniram suas forças para lançar um trio de edições encadernadas (em cores) republicando Conon, o Bárbaro, a pioneira adaptação Marvel estrelada pelo mais famoso herói da literatura de espada & magia. Os três volumes iniciais compilaram os números 1 a 9 do gibi, e hoje chegamos ao quarto volume, reapresentando as edições 10 e 11 de um curto período em que a Marvel decidiu testar uma nova estrutura em suas publicações. Em vez das habituais 32 páginas, os gibis da Casa das Ideias passaram a ter 48.

No momento em que estou redigindo este prefácio, tudo indica que o mercado de quadrinhos encadernados pode ser o último que resta a ser conquistado pelo nosso formidável Cimério. Afinal, da metade para o fim da década de 1960, os livros de bolso e compilações em capa cartonada contendo os contos do Gigante de Bronze venderam uns poucos milhões (no mínimo) de exemplares, ao passo que, em um período equivalente nesta década de 1970, a Marvel vendeu dezenos de milhões de cópias somando-se os quase 100 números já lançados de nossa revista colorida, CB (que segue firme e forte como um dos campeões de vendas da editora), aos 40 de sua companheira em preto e branco e formato maior, A Espada Selvagem de Conan (The Savage Sword of Congn) – uma publicação que consegue se sustentar com periodicidade mensal mesmo sendo mais cara. Além disso, a tira de jornal do Cimério, também produzida pela Marvel, alcança todos os dias os leitores de um grande número de tabloides do país inteiro.

Também tivemos nada menos que três discos de vinil com dramatizações das aventuras do bárbaro nesta década — nos moldes dos antigos programas de radioteatro —, e sabemos que há um promissor filme em fase de produção.

Portanto, a menos que o referido longa metragem seja um campeão de bilheterias capaz de originar um seriado de TV, o próximo passo parecia ser óbvio: reedições encadernadas (brochuras) das histórias em quadrinhos.

E por que não? A julgar pelas incontáveis cartas enviadas nos últimos oito anos sobre nossos dois títulos do Conan, é certo que um volume considerável de leitores hoje entusiastas, por um ou outro motivo (eram jovens demais, ainda não tinham gosto apurado, não encontravam o gibi em suas localidades, etc.), perdeu as edições iniciais de Conan, e tentar adquiri-las na atualidade seria uma árdua e dispendiosa missão.

Em suma: todos os fatores acima só comprovam que, ao longo de várias décadas, Conan vem acumulando uma legião crescente de fãs ardorosos e insaciáveis. Quanto mais aventuras são criadas, mais eles querem. Foram esses anseios incessantes que, na década de 1950, culminaram na contratação de L. Sprague de Camp — um renomado autor de ficção científica e fantasia — para ampliar os cânones do Gigante de Bronze convertendo em histórias do Conan alguns contos protagonizados por outros personagens de Robert E. Howard. Anos depois, um fã escandinavo chamado Björn Nyberg aventurou-se a escrever um romance do bárbaro, e sua obra também foi reformulada por de Camp antes de ser publicada sob o título Conan, o Vingador. Até mesmo uma solitária página contendo uma mísera sinopse de Howard rendeu um novo conto do Cimério (O Salão dos Mortos) graças a de Camp.

Mais adiante, embora Nyberg tenha se tornado um empresário na Europa e contribuído apenas esporadicamente com a saga de Conan, de Camp iniciou uma frutífera parceria com o autor Lin Carter. Em um projeto ainda vigente, eles escreveram juntos uma série de contos e romances do Gigante de Bronze, enquanto Carter, sozinho, teve a própria oportunidade de expandir um fragmento de enredo de REH, transformando-o em A Mão de Nergal. Da mesma forma surgiu a narrativa que ostenta o bizarro título O Focinho na Escuridão e leva nos créditos os nomes de Howard, de Camp e Carter.

Enfim, o mundo (permita-me repetir) anseia cada vez mais por aventuras do Conan, tanto em seu formato original literário quanto, ao que tudo indica, em forma de arte sequencial. Por isso fico tão feliz em ter produzido, até o momento, cerca de quatro mil páginas de quadrinhos — número provavelmente equivalente, ou até superior, ao volume de prosa escrita por todos os meus colegas juntos!

E eu continuo adorando este trabalho!

Minha humilde abordagem dos quadrinhos do Cimério, formando dupla criativa com vários ilustradores - primeiro o fabuloso Barry Smith, seguido (até hoje) pelo exuberante John Buscema e, na tira de jornal, o entusiástico Ernie Chan -, não é muito diferente do início de L. Sprague de Camp, há quase um quarto de século. Nossas publicações já apresentaram adaptações diretas dos contos de Howard, mas comecei escrevendo histórias originais e, a exemplo de Sprague, convertendo em aventuras do Conan diversos contos de outros personagens howardianos. Nesses casos, sempre autorizado, aconselhado e incentivado por Glenn Lord, o agente literário e licenciante da Fundação Robert E. Howard. Graças a ele, tive o privilégio de ler e me encantar com um leque de narrativas originais de Howard anos antes de vê-las impressas, ao menos nessa onda um tanto recente dos livros de bolso e compilações populares com capa cartonada.

Nos três volumes anteriores desta coleção, reunimos alguns dos mencionados contos que se tornaram gibis do Cimério: O Crepúsculo do Deus Cinzento e O Jardim do Medo. Também adaptei o mesmo fragmento de enredo que de Camp transformou em O Salão dos Mortos; no meu caso, desenvolvendo a trama de Os Guardiões da Tumba. Outra ideia extravagante da minha parte foi criar a trama de A Filha de Zukala baseado em A Hora de Zukala, um poema composto por REH, nosso mestre falecido em 1936 (quase quatro anos antes do meu nascimento).

Por fim, havia outro recurso criativo que adotei e tinha sido usado por de Camp e Carter — e, décadas antes, por August Derleth em suas contribuições com o legado póstumo de H.P. Lovecraft. Estou me referindo à criação de tramas originais a partir de meras pistas ou comentários aleatórios espalhados pelos textos de Howard. Temos um grande exemplo a seguir, na aventura que precede nossa adaptação de Inimigos em Casa, um conto original de REH. Relembremos...

Na abertura de Inimigos em Cosa, Howard dedicou um longo parágrafo a uma sinopse que sempre me deixou com a sensação de que se tratava de um torturante "desperdício criativo". Como "Inimigos" começa com o Cimério acorrentado num calabouço, o autor esclarece em seu texto introdutório o motivo do aprisionamento: havia naquela cidade um sacerdote do deus Anu, o qual atuava secretamente como receptador de mercadorias roubadas. Por alguma razão particular, o corrupto religioso traiu e entregou à guarda citadina um certo ladrão, que acabou condenado à morte. Acontece que o larápio em questão era amigo de Conan, e o bárbaro decide se vingar matando o sacerdote. O Cimério consuma sua vingança, porém, é descoberto e capturado pelas forças da lei, por isso está preso no início de "Inimigos".

A captura de Conan eu mantive em seu devido lugar — um flashback em Inimígos em Casa —, mas tudo que o escritor texano resumiu na solitária introdução, eu e Barry Smith transformamos em uma aventura completa, incluindo nela dois personagens que o bárbaro tinha conhecido em edições anteriores: Jenna e um ex-soldado gunderlandês chamado Burgun. Assim nasceu a história inédita A Ira de Anu, nosso prelúdio exclusivo para a adaptação em quadrinhos de Inimigos em Caso. Juntas, as duas aventuras entraram para o seleto rol que eu e Barry consideramos nossos melhores trabalhos nos primórdios de Conan, o Bárbaro. Sobretudo porque, como ambas fizeram parte do período experimental em que os gibis da Marvel ganharam mais páginas, conseguimos produzir conteúdo suficiente para ocupar com extrema qualidade o espaço adicional!

A história, aliás, marcou a última aparição de Jenna (até o presente, cerca de sete anos após), a coadjuvante que eu e Barry criamos e se tornou uma de nossas favoritas naqueles anos iniciais do gibi. Ela surgiu em Asas Demoníacas Sobre Shadizar, depois reencontrou o bárbaro em Os Guardiões da Tumba. O reencontro, na verdade, foi nosso pretexto para fazer de Jenna a protagonista de uma das mais famosas cenas concebidas por Robert E. Howard: como castigo por tê-lo traído, Conan atira a linda, mas nada confiável garota, em um córrego infestado de excrementos humanos. Apesar de não ser propenso a matar mulheres, o Cimério sempre teve um temperamento mórbido a ponto de pensar em uma vingança como essa. Caso esteja me perguntando se Jenna pode ressurgir no futuro, não tenho como saber. Confesso que trazê-la de volta é uma tentação permanente... porém, acho que estamos todos cansados de ver filmes exuberantes ganharem continuações que se revelam desastrosas, não estamos?

Agora, como tem sido frequente nesta publicação, não custa nada deixar um modesto resumo para orientar leitores novatos ou que não tenham adquirido nossos volumes 1 a 3 (os quais permanecem à venda). Vamos lá:

Nascido na primitiva Ciméria, ao norte de seu mundo, Conan se envereda rumo ao sul em busca de aventuras e riquezas. Sua jornada o leva à sinistra nação de Zamora, onde ele passa primeiro por Arenjun, a infame Cidade dos Ladrões; depois pela capital do reino, a igualmente corrupta Shadizar, a Perversa. Ainda adolescente (cerca de 16 anos), o bárbaro angaria seu sustento diário como um arrojado, embora não muito cauteloso ladrão. Com o tempo, ele parte de Zamora com destino ao leste e, quando se encontra em terras fronteiriças de Corintia, alia-se (a contragosto) ao mercenário gunderlandês Burgun. Juntos, eles tentam se apoderar das riquezas escondidas no templo de uma antiga cidadela abandonada e reduzida a ruínas. Entretanto, para o infortúnio dos saqueadores, o tesouro é preservado por guardiões tão aterradores quanto mortíferos. Conan e Burgun conseguem sobreviver e batem em retirada, mas, durante a fuga, acabam separados por um terremoto que arrasa de vez a cidadela.

Em seguida, o Cimério perambula até encontrar o povoado mais próximo e, na taverna local, reencontra "por acaso" a traiçoeira Jenna. Momentos após, ambos são obrigados a fugir dos guardas de um magistrado incumbido de capturar o bárbaro. Posteriormente, enquanto o casal atravessa um misterioso vale, Jenna é raptada por um ancestral humanoide alado. Conan consegue matar a bizarra criatura e resgatar Jenna, com a qual retoma sua jornada em direção às paragens mais civilizadas (e ricas) de Corintia.

É nesse ponto que você encontra o Cimério nas páginas a seguir.

1978

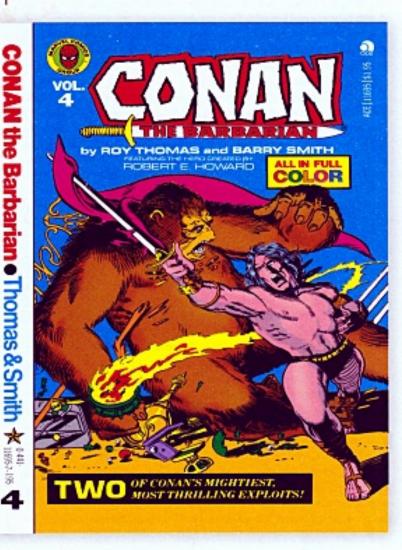
"Know. O prince, that between the years when the oceans drank Atlantis and the gleaming cities, and the rise of the sons of Aryas, there was an Age undreamed-of, when shining kingdoms lay spread across the world like blue mantles beneath the stars.

"Hither came Conan, the Cimmerian, black-haired, sullen-eyed, sword in hand, a thief, a reaver, a slayer, with gigantic melanchalles and gigantic mirth, to tread the jeweled thrones of the Earth under his sandaled feet."

—The Nemedian Chronicles.



VOLUME FOUR OF THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN!



THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN THE BARBARIAN VOL. 5 (1978).

COMPILANDO: Conan the Barbarian 12, 13 e 16

INTRODUÇÃO: Roy Thomas (Tradução de Fernando Bertacchini)

Uma Breve Cronologia para a Atualidade:

1932: O primeiro conto de Conan da Ciméria escrito por Robert E. Howard é publicado na edição de dezembro de Weird Tales, uma longeva, porém depreciada revista especializada em histórias macabras.

1946: A editora Arkham House, de August Derleth, publica uma luxuosa coletânea em capa dura reunindo diversas aventuras do Conan, e outras tantas protagonizadas por outros personagens do finado REH. Intitulado "Rosto de Coveiro e Outros Contos" (Skull-Face and Others), o livro teve uma tiragem de apenas três mil exemplares. Desde então, é considerado um clássico muito desejado e procurado pelos fãs de Howard.

1950: A Gnome Press, uma pequena editora de obras de ficção científica em capa dura, publica o romance "Conon, o Conquistador" (Conon the Conqueror). Pela primeira vez, um livro inteiro era dedicado ao intempestivo Cimério. Nessa ocasião, o diretor editorial Martin Greenburg decidiu imprimir cinco mil cópias. O sucesso da publicação assegurou o lançamento de novos volumes, iniciando uma série que acabou incluindo histórias do Rei Kull e a contratação de L. Sprague de Camp para ampliar os cânones howardianos.

1953: A editora Ace Books promove o lançamento do primeiro livro popular (formato de bolso, papel barato e capa cartonada) de Conan, embora não tenha sido totalmente voltado a
ele. Com uma capa melodramática, a edição republicava Conan,
o Conquistador (o único romance escrito por REH) em sua primeira metade. Na segunda, a atração era a narrativa de ficção científica "A Espada de Rhiannon" (The Sword of Rhiannon), de Leigh Brackett. A obra seria parte de uma coleção planejada para reunir
dois romances a cada volume, mas as vendas do primeiro foram
tão baixas que, durante anos, a editora se recusou a cogitar espada & magia ou qualquer coisa que tivesse a menor afinidade
com esse gênero.

1966: Lancer Books, outra editora relativamente pequena de literatura popular, decola rumo à estratosfera com o lançamento de "Conon, o Aventureiro" (Conon the Adventurer). Editado por de Camp, o livro inaugurava uma nova coleção de compilações de contos do Cimério e exibia na capa a primeira de uma sequência de pinturas épicas. Formato, estilo artístico e senso de oportunidade combinaram-se com a força das histórias em si para transformar Robert E. Howard em um dos mais influentes autores de fantasia moderna, superado apenas por Edgar Rice Burroughs e J.R.R. Tolkien.

1970: A Marvel Comics negocia com Glenn Lord, o agente literário da Fundação REH, os direitos de publicação do Cimério. Atendendo a um pedido frequente dos leitores, a Casa das Ideias decidira produzir uma adaptação em quadrinhos de um herói de espada & magia, e o escolhido é o formidável bárbaro de Howard. Tendo Roy Thomas como roteirista/editor, e arte de Barry Smith, o título Conon, o Bórboro estreia bem, mas logo amarga um período de vendas decadentes. O risco de fracasso, no entanto, dura poucos meses. Em seguida, a popularidade e o desempenho comercial de Conon melhoram a cada edição. Com o tempo, a revista do Gigante de Bronze ingressa na seleta galeria de campeões de vendas da Marvel, um triunfo colossal a ponto de estimular o lançamento de novos títulos dedicados tanto ao Cimério quanto a outros heróis épicos de Howard. Na verdade, as publicações da Marvel ajudam até mesmo a manter vivos o nome e a fama de Conan durante alguns anos em que, por ironia do destino, seus livros ficaram fora de catálogo - devido a um processo de recuperação judicial enfrentado pela editora Lancer. Além disso, o êxito do Gigante de Bronze na nona arte inspirou muitas outras adaptações em quadrinhos de espada & magia, ainda que estas não tenham alcançado o mesmo sucesso.

1976: Enfim, executivos de Hollywood entram em negociação para levar as aventuras do Conan às telas de cinema. Com orçamento de superprodução e o fisiculturista Arnold Schwarzenegger no papel principal, as expectativas de que o vindouro filme seria um campeão de bilheterias refletem no mercado literário. Em uma surpreendente reviravolta, as amarras legais são desemaranhadas para assegurar um triunfante evento editorial...

1977: As coletâneas do Cimério voltam finalmente às bancas e livrarias. Todos os 12 volumes são relançados em formato de bolso sob o selo Prestige Books, enquanto a distribuição permanece com a editora Ace. No que diz respeito a Conan, essa foi sempre a coleção mais valorizada pelos fãs de Howard — apesar de outras editoras terem publicado vários títulos no período em que ela esteve fora de catálogo. Diversos anos seguidos sem relançamentos da prosa howardiana, em combinação com as hordas de novos leitores formados pelo premiado quadrinho da Marvel, culminam em uma segunda maré de vendas milionárias para os livros de bolso, esta ainda maior e mais importante do que a primeira.

1978: Com a produção cinematográfica em estado avançado, e mais contos e romances pastichos publicados, a Marvel se associa à Conan para negociar com a agência de distribuição de lowa a publicação de uma tira de jornal do personagem. Até o final do mesmo ano, a tira diária em preto e branco, assim como suas páginas dominicais coloridas, estariam presentes em cerca de 100 jornais do Estados Unidos. A nova conquista quadrinística do Cimério tem roteiro de Roy Thomas, arte de John Buscema e, mais tarde, Ernie Chan.

1979: A editora Ace Books lança The Complete Marvel Conon the Barbarian, uma reedição em brochuras das aventuras publicadas em Conan, o Bárbaro, a pioneira revista em quadrinhos da Marvel Comics lançada em 1970. Os volumes 1 a 3 chegam simultaneamente às bancas e livrarias em fevereiro, os próximos três ou quatro estão previstos para o mesmo ano. O processo de remontagem parcial dos quadros para adaptar a arte à estrutura e ao formato diferentes tem supervisão de Roy Thomas. Paralelamente, a Ace Books publica o primeiro volume de uma série de romances protagonizados por Sonja, uma guerreira ruiva criada por Robert E. Howard, mas vertida para a Era Hiboriana de Conan pela equipe criativa da Marvel.

1980: Muito bem... veremos. A estreia do tão aguardado longa-metragem está prevista para esse ano. Até lá, decerto novos livros do Cimério serão lançados, a tira de jornal ampliará sua prosperidade chegando a muitos outros periódicos, e a Marvel acumulará mais algumas centenas de páginas empolgantes nos quadrinhos de Conan, o Bárbaro; A Espado Selvagem de Conan e Rei Conan. Portanto, se a década de 1980 não se consagrar como a Nova Era de Conan — tão gloriosa e inesquecível quanto foi, 12 milênios atrás, a lendária Era Hiboriana de Howard —, só me restará trocar minha bola de cristal por uma máquina do tempo e um surrado par de raquetes de neve.

Neste volume, por vários motivos, a ordem cronológica das histórias sofre uma interrupção. A primeira delas, O Habitante das Trevas, era uma aventura originalmente ilustrada para publicação em preto e branco e formato maior na revista Savage Tales — a precursora do sucesso atual de Savage Sword of Conan. Uma vez que o magazine foi engavetado logo após a primeira edição, resolvemos

ajustar e colorir "Habitante" para encaixá-la em Conon, the Borborian 12. Por sorte, ao menos ela funciona como sequência de Inimigos em Coso e antecessora de A Teio do Deus-Aronho.

Um rápido aparte: publicada em 1972, A Tela do Deus-Aranha foi uma história contemplada com a virtude adicional de ter seu enredo concebido por John Jakes, o escritor de ficção científica que, desde então, conquistou fama e fortuna como um dos mais celebrados autores do gênero.

A terceira aventura desta edição é, de longe, a mais deslocada na cronologia: nossa adaptação de A Filha do Gigante de Gelo (sem dúvida, um dos contos prediletos de incontáveis fãs de Robert E. Howard) fora publicada no primeiro número de Savage Tales, uma revista planejada para apresentar histórias sem implicações cronológicas. Por isso, no que diz respeito à vida do Cimério, esse episódio se passa em um período bem distinto daquele que eu e Barry Smith estávamos desenvolvendo em Conon. Nessa época, no entanto, Barry me comunicou pela primeira vez (outras duas viriam nos meses seguintes) sua decisão de abandonar a arte do Cimério. Para lhe conceder uma despedida triunfal, ambos concordamos que seria ótimo republicar A Filha do Gigante de Gelo em cores e com uma nova página de abertura.

Não apenas para garantir que os primeiros volumes da presente coleção reunissem quase todos os trabalhos de Barry Smith, mas também porque a adaptação de "Gigante de Gelo" acabou integrada à numeração de CB, resolvemos incluí-la neste volume. Como se não bastassem os motivos supracitados, trata-se de uma história mais curta, uma particularidade que a tornou perfeita para completar o total de páginas deste encadernado. Seja como for, não se preocupe com questões cronológicas, pois as três aventuras aqui reunidas têm tramas fechadas e independentes. Caso esteja duvidando, tente inverter a ordem de leitura para comprovar. Esta edição tem início logo após nossa versão do conto Inimigos em Cosa. Conan havia passado por uma grande cidade (supostamente situada em Coríntia, mas o próprio Howard nunca estabeleceu esse detalhe) e, agora, está a caminho do leste. O pretenso destino do bárbaro aventureiro é Zamora, a primeira grande nação por ele visitada. Pouco mais de um ano se passou desde que Conan abandonou a vida rústica na Ciméria, sua primitiva terra natal no extremo norte. Embora ainda seja um adolescente (entre 16 e 17 anos de idade), ele começa a compreender os modos da civilização e a perceber que precisa ser mais prudente e astuto em suas jornadas. Isso, porém, não o torna menos alienado para os povos civilizados, que o consideram um selvagem ignóbil e desprezível. Seja em Zamora ou na pequena cidade-estado de Zhamahn, por onde o Cimério está transitando no momento...

1978

THREE OF CONAN'S MOST DANGER-FILLED EXPLOITS!

"WEB OF THE SPIDER GOD"

"THE DWELLER IN THE DARK"

"THE FROST GIANT'S DAUGHTER"

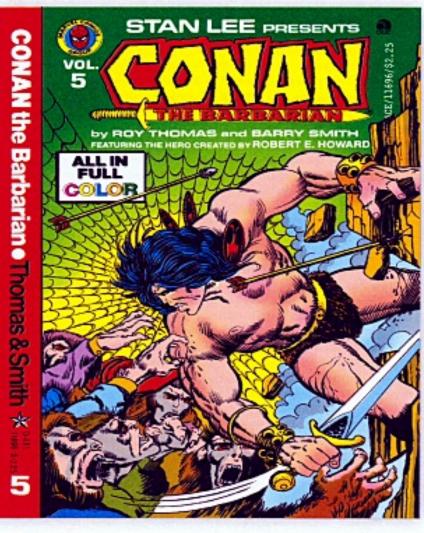
Featuring the first and foremost Sword-and-Sorcery hero of them all!



"CONAN THE CIMMERIAN—

BLACK-HAIRED, SULLEN-EYED, SWORD IN HAND ... A THIEF A REAVER, A SLAYER"

-ROBERT E. HOWARD



THE COMPLETE MARVEL CONAN THE BARBARIAN VOL.6 (1978).

COMPILANDO: Conan the Barbarian 14 e 15 e duas aventuras curtas publicadas em Conan the Barbarian 12 e 87 INTRODUÇÃO: Roy Thomas (Tradução de Fernando Bertacchini)

Hoje em dia, no mundo inteiro, Conan é o mais popular de todos os heróis de espada & magia. Ponto final.

Palavras fortes, talvez, mas quase inegavelmente verdadeiras. Sobretudo considerando que épicos literários como a trilogia O Senhor dos Anéis e O Hobbit, ambos concebidos por J.R.R. Tolkien, são parte de uma tradição muito mais antiga de fantasia heroica, na qual encontramos lugares e nomes que remontam à pré-história. "Terra Média", por exemplo, figura na mitologia escandinava como Midgard ou Middle Garden (em tradução livre, Jardim do Meio ou Jardim Central).

Portanto, desconsiderando as criações do finado professor Tolkien, ou mesmo outros heróis derivados — por exemplo: as tramas de Sinbad, o marujo aventureiro dos filmes clássicos de Ray Harryhausen, são cheias de elementos de espada & magia, mas não constituem o artigo genuíno —. Conan reina supremo no topo da montanha. Nada mais justo, aliás, pois o Cimério foi moldando a espada & magia até que esse gênero chegasse ao modelo específico pelo qual é conhecido há mais de meio século. Não sozinho, é claro. Além de seu bárbaro hiboriano, o escritor Robert Ervin Howard criou mais alguns protagonistas de contos repletos de feitiçaria e batalhas medievais, como Bran Mak Morn, Rei Kull e Solomon Kane.

Conan, porém, foi sempre o personagem mais imitado, aquele que inspirou várias outras criações de espada & magia, muitas das quais eram tão originais e diferentes quanto o próprio Cimério se distinguia dos intrépidos espadachins que o precederam; e seus mundos, tão distintos quanto a Era Hiboriana em comparação com a Britânia pré-romana de Tros, o guerreiro dos contos fantásticos de Talbot Mundy.

Evidentemente, em meio às publicações que expandiram o gênero, surgiram séries que se tornaram famosas e também cairam no gosto dos fãs de Robert E. Howard. Dentre elas, podemos destacar as aventuras de Fafhrd e Gray Mouser, criadas pelo
veterano autor de ficção científica Fritz Leiber — ainda que os
heróis desses contos sejam dotados de sabedoria e astúcia que
deixariam desnorteado o bárbaro de Howard, quase como se os
Sete Anões da Disney fossem parar na adaptação em desenho
animado de O Senhor dos Anéis, dirigida por Ralph Bakshi.

A segunda celebrada série a aflorar em minha memória é a saga de Atlan (um continente cujo nome é clara referência à Atlântida), narrada em três livros pela escritora britânica Jane Gaskell. A obra de Gaskell, por sinal, poderia até ser definida como uma transposição de espada & magia para os romances góticos.

A terceira, e talvez a maior fantasia heroica pós-howardiana é, sem dúvida, o soberbo Elric de Melniboné!

Elric foi criado por Michael Moorcock, um inglês considerado um dos garotos-prodígios da ficção científica e fantasia britânica (deveras, milordel) na década de 1960. Com histórias como Eis o Homem e tantas outras, Moorcock forjou um tipo de combinação do mundo de Conan / REH com o de Tolkien, embora supere ambos no que diz respeito a elementos de genuína tragédia (e não me entenda mal; Conan foi e sempre será meu primeiro amor, mas a verdade tem de ser reconhecida!).

Publicado pela primeira vez nos Estados Unidos em um par de livros lançados em 1967, Elric não tardou para se tornar um dos poucos heróis que, para os entusiastas de Conan, seria capaz de se equiparar ao mortifero Cimério em um duelo de espadas — antes dele, talvez apenas Fafhrd e Mouser tenham merecido a mesma consideração por parte dos aficionados howardianos. Em uma análise imparcial, se esse confronto chegasse realmente a ocorrer, com certeza o albino dos olhos rubros venceria. Afinal, ele possui uma espada mística chamada Stormbringer, ao passo que o Gigante de Bronze confiaria sua vida a qualquer lâmina que estivesse ao seu alcance.

Particularmente, nunca fui muito fă de armas mágicas. A meu ver, elas acabam roubando o heroísmo, a glória dos protagonistas de narrativas fantásticas. Na verdade, cheguei até a explorar esse ponto de vista numa aventura do Conan. Entretanto, Elric já era e continua sendo, em minha opinião, a proverbial exceção que desafia a regra. Não só desafia, mas chega muito perto de desintegrá-la para sempre. Isso porque sua insólita e misteriosa espada, Stormbringer (também conhecida como Assimiladora de Almas) é uma força em si mesma. Dotada de vontade própria e de uma ferrenha determinação que rivaliza com a do próprio Elric, a lâmina ebânea assume o papel de coprotagonista das histórias, em vez de ser uma simples arma metálica. Enquanto for o proprietário de Stormbringer, Elric jamais estará sozinho — por mais que ele mesmo possa ansiar pela solidão.

Como os contos que eu li me deixaram com essa impressão positiva de Elric, pouco depois do lançamento de Conan, o Bárbaro, resolvi entrar em contato com Moorcock, que residia em Londres. Meio receoso, apresentei a ele minha acanhada sugestão de um "encontro" dos personagens no gibi da Marvel. Para o meu encanto, Moorcock aprovou a ideia e, sem demora, reuniuse com seu amigo e às vezes colaborador James Cawthorn para me enviar várias páginas de enredo. Porém, levando em conta a natureza das histórias em quadrinhos em comparação com os contos em prosa, eu e o artista Barry Smith sentimos a necessidade de simplificar o enredo de Moorcock & Cawthorn. Sem abusar, é claro; a maior parte da história permaneceu inalterada, inclusive diversos nomes polissilábicos capazes de irritar aqueles que tivessem aprendido a ler por métodos iconográficos.

Apesar do sucesso dessa aventura (que acabamos dividindo em duas edições), ela nos deixou com um grande arrependimento: os poucos livros até então publicados nos Estados Unidos apresentavam nas capas um retrato impreciso de Elric e, por razões complicadas demais para serem abordadas neste espaço, nós cometemos o erro de adotar o modelo incorreto. Ou seja, o Elric adaptado para os nossos quadrinhos não tem um aspecto fiel ao do personagem descrito nos textos originais. O chapéu cônico, por exemplo, foi invenção do artista que ilustrou a capa de um dos livros norte-americanos, não de Moorcock. Outra cruel diferença são os trajes do albino, indescritivelmente mais vistosos e solenes nos romances. Para o nosso pesar, baseado nas ilustrações deturpadas, Barry manteve tanto o chapéu quanto os trajes bem menos imponentes do que deveriam ser.

Em todo caso, devo também observar que nem sempre o próprio Conan pode ser ilustrado nos quadrinhos de acordo com as descrições de Howard em certas ocasiões. Essa, aliás, é uma particularidade que até hoje tento esclarecer quando sou obrigado a me defender da fúria de puristas howardianos.

Quanto ao monumental encontro quadrinístico em si, você vai perceber que essa aventura em dois capítulos é meio diferente da epopeia do Gigante de Bronze até ali. Afinal, ele e Elric salvam juntos o mundo, e esse é o tipo de proeza que nunca figurou entre as maiores prioridades de Conan. Mas nem por isso seria algo inconcebível para o Cimério, como alguns fas podem pensar. Reflita comigo... nosso bárbaro não poderia continuar perseguindo aventuras, tesouros e pilhagens em um planeta extinto, poderia?

Uma derradeira orientação: caso você nunca tenha lido nenhum dos livros de Elric, nada tema. Michael Moorcock e James Cawthorn criaram uma história fechada e independente — embora apresente mais enredos secundários do que a maior parte das aventuras do Conan. Apenas relaxe, leia e deleite-se (espero!) com um clássico da nona arte — como eu me deleitei na primeira vez que li o enredo de Moorcock & Cawthorn, quase uma década atrás.

Antes de me despedir, preciso tecer alguns comentários acerca de duas aventuras incluídas neste volume, nas quais não há nenhuma participação do Gigante de Bronze. Ao contrário do que você possa estar pensando, ambas têm, sim, um lugar adequado nesta coleção.

A primeira delas trata da Era Hiboriana, o período fictício criado na década de 1930 por Robert E. Howard como parte do cenário da vida de Conan. Em vez de continuar transmitindo ao leitor somente uma noção sumária dessa época, eu e Ernie Chan decidimos produzir uma pequena raridade: uma aventura contendo a "cronografia" da Era Hiboriana. E, como nela estabelecemos o panorama de todos os quadrinhos do Conan, fazia pleno sentido reapresentá-la aqui – mesmo sendo mais recente do que todas as edições de Conan, o Bárbaro reeditadas nos volumes anteriores.

A outra história sem o Gigante de Bronze é O Sangue do Dragão. Tudo começou quando me ocorreu a noção de que inúmeros episódios envolvendo espada e magia aconteciam ao mesmo tempo no decorrer da vida de Conan, e tantos outros antes e depois dela. Seria até ridículo imaginar que toda a "diversão" daqueles tempos fosse reservada com exclusividade ao bárbaro. A partir desse conceito, eu e o desenhista Gil Kane (com arte-final de Tom Palmer, Bernie Wrightson e do próprio Kane) resolvemos criar uma aventura curta situada mais ou menos na mesma época em que o Cimério teria vivido. Presumimos que você gostaria de conhecer essa peripécia publicada como conteúdo complementar em CB 12, cuja história principal já republicamos nesta coleção. Além disso, venho acalentando desde então um desejo ardente de, algum dia, produzir uma história na qual o próprio Conan se depare com o monstro criado para essa aventura, o Hidragão, portanto, queremos deixar todos os fãs preparados para o futuro.

Enfim, vamos ao nosso habitual resumo da vida de Conan até o momento épico que você está prestes a desfrutar.

Nascido em pleno campo de batalha na montanhosa Ciméria (situada no gélido norte do mundo hiboriano), Conan decidiu abandonar sua terra natal e partir rumo ao sul em busca de aventuras e tesouros. A fim de angariar seu sustento nos reinos civilizados, o jovem bárbaro passou a viver como um arrojado, porém, incauto ladrão. Com o tempo, descobriu que poderia sair-se melhor alugando sua espada e se tornou um mercenário — afinal, nada o impediria de combinar ambos as ocupações sempre que surgisse uma oportunidade. Há poucas semanas, na cidade zamoriana de Yezud, Conan sobreviveu ao bizarro culto de Omm, o deus-aranha, e agora cavalga na estepe que delimita a fronteira leste de Koth...

167

1978



TWO ADVENTURES OF THE MIGHTY CIMMERIAN:

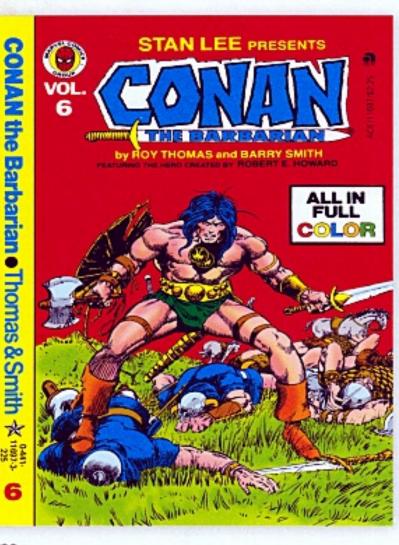
"A SWORD CALLED STORMBRINGER"
"GREEN EMPRESS OF MELNIBONE"
Plus—

TWO STORIES OF THE SAVAGE WORLD OF CONAN:

"THE HYBORIAN AGE"
"BLOOD OF THE DRAGON"

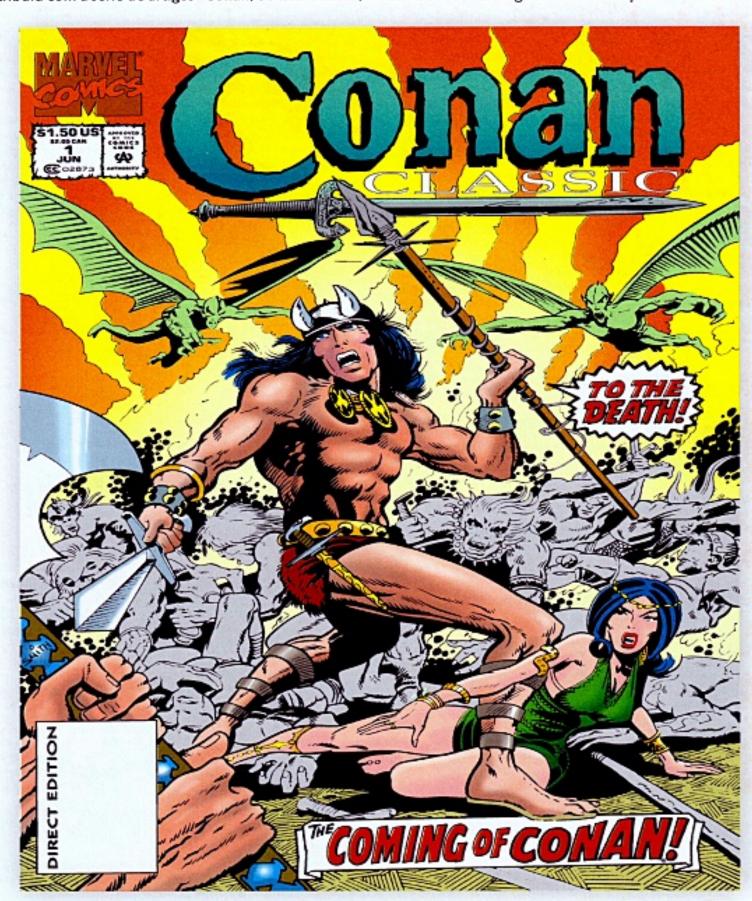


VOLUME SIX OF THE

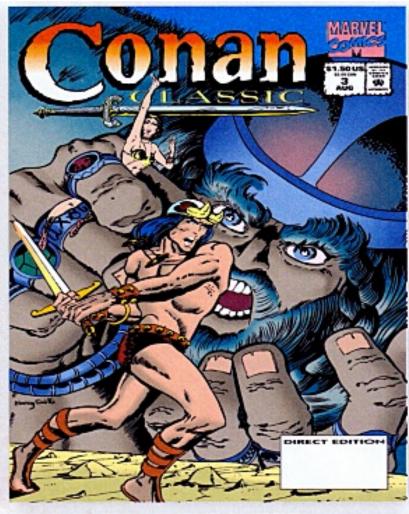


CONAN CLASSIC 1-11 (1994-1995), CAPAS. REIMPRIMINDO: Conan, The Barbarian 1-10 e 13.

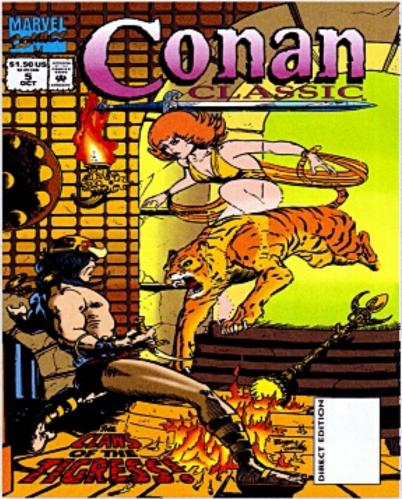
Conan emplacou sua primeira série de reimpressões em cores na revista Conan Classic, de 1994. Ao longo de suas 11 edições, ela reimprimiu os números 1 a 10 e 13 de Conan, The Barbarian, assim como várias ilustrações pin-up e capas de Conan, The Barbarian Annual 1, Savage Tales 2-4, The Savage Sword of Conan 13 e Conan Saga 1. Roy Thomas também contribuiu com a série de artigos "Conan, o Maravilhoso", refletindo sobre as origens de cada edição.

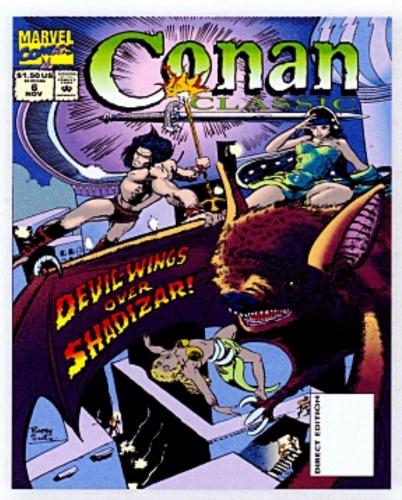




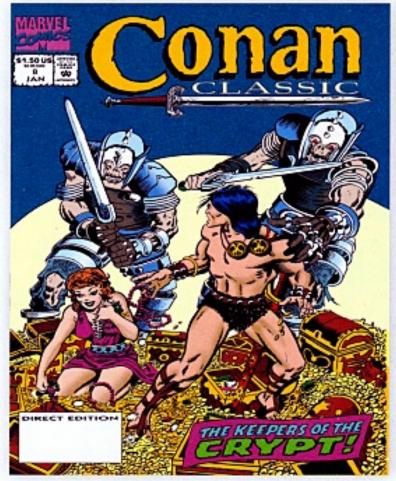


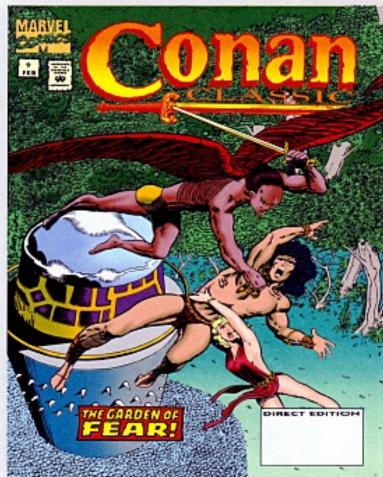


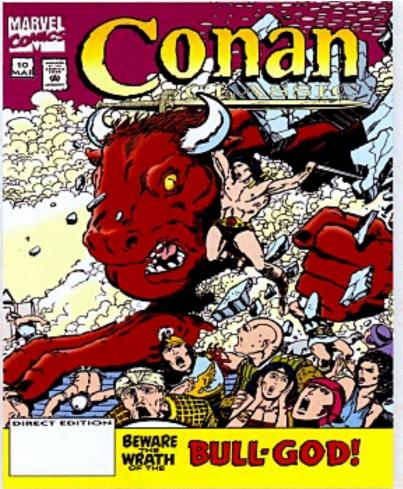


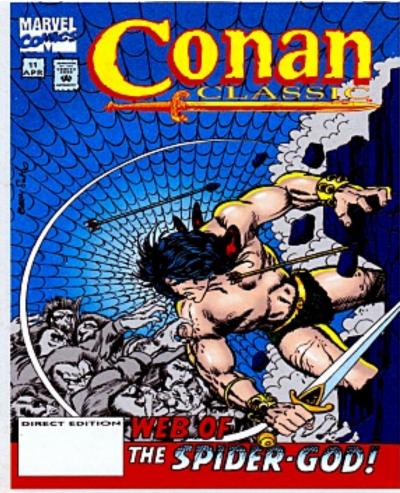














Reprodução do artigo de Roy Thomas.

CONAN THE MARVELOUS

A PERSONAL PREFACE BY ROY THOMAS

I. "KNOW, O PRINCE. . ."

CONAN CLASSIC.

Has a nice ring to it, don't you think?

Of course, I'm prejudiced. As the writer and de facto editor of CONAN THE BARBARIAN for its first 115 issues, from 1970 to 1980, I'd naturally think that.

Still, in all honesty, I truly believe CONAN THE BARBARIAN deserves the designation "classic," by the dictionary definition of "something that sets a standard" or "of enduring interest, quality, or style."

Not simply because Barry Windsor-Smith (then Barry Smith) hit his stride illustrating most of the first two dozen issues, even though without his spectacular artwork to kick things off, all this precious paper would've been used for some other purpose for I believe that later CTB work by Gil Kane, John Buscema, and others is also deserving of a discriminating 90s audience.

Not only because Robert E. Howard's hero is the epitome of "sword-and-sorcery" — for even if Barry and I had been weaving yarns about one of Conan's imitators, some of these tales would probably still be worth reprinting.

Not only because CTB utilized some of Howard's best writing but also for a few stories and flights of verbal fancy that REH inspired in me, and for the awesome images it inspired first Barry, then others, to turn from words into pictures.

CONAN CLASSIC isn't my brainchild, though. It was conceived and nurtured by editor Richard Ashford, who decided it just wasn't enough for the early CONAN THE BARBARIAN to have been reprinted in black-and-white in our companion title CONAN SAGA.

I was surprised and overjoyed when I learned CONAN CLASSIC would debut at the same time as the all-new CONAN THE AD-VENTURER with pulse-pounding artwork by Rafael Kayanan. I was elated when Richard asked me to scribble a sort of ongoing history of CTB and its stories, and I'm delighted to comply

So here's the story behind not only CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1 — but the entire series!

II. "AN AGE UNDREAMED OF"

Marvel's original editor in chief, Stan Lee, always said our readers were the real editors, and that was never truer than in the case of CONAN THE BARBARIAN.

By 1969 Marvel (of which I was associate editor, then the #2 editorial position) was receiving mail begging us to adapt certain literary creations into our pages — particularly Edgar Rice Bur-roughs's Tarzan and John Carter of Mars, J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, Doc Savage — and Robert E. Howard's Conan the

We took all these suggestions to heart, because both Stan and I wanted to stretch the boundaries of the comic book a bit, by bringing in material besides super heroes. I had purchased a few mid-60s Conan paperbacks, mostly for their Frank Frazetta covers, but hadn't bothered to read a single story all the way through. Our letter-writers, however, convinced us that maybe publishing a sword-and-sorcery comic wouldn't be such a bad

With Stan's encouragement, I wrote a three-page memo to Marvel's publisher, Martin Goodman, on why such a mag might sell. I emphasized it would feature a powerful hero, even if he had no true super-powers or costume - that there'd be monsters galore (I didn't think it a good idea to stress the "sor-cery" aspect in the memo) — and that there'd be plenty of beautiful women in attendance.

Goodman was favorably impressed by the memo, and authorized Stan and me to offer a minuscule amount of money per issue for rights to the paperback sword-and-sorcery hero of our choice. So, on Marvel's behalf, I promptly began negotations to acquire the rights to -

Thongor of Lost Lemuria!

III. "TOWERS OF SPIDER-HAUNTED MYSTERY"

Yes, that's right. The first hero we went after was the late Lin Carter's then-new Thongor, a hero half-Conan, half-John Carter of Mars, who had already appeared in several paperbacks, including two with Frazetta covers. Quite frankly, Stan and I had figured that Conan himself would be out of our price range. And I seem to recall Stan saying that he liked the name "Thongor" better than "Conan" anyway. Besides, Thongor in the City of Magicians had been the very first S&S book I had actually read all the way through.

But, though Lin liked the idea of a Thongor comic, his agent dragged his feet. No wonder, with such small sums involved.

Still, this snag quickly proved frustrating to me. Then, one night, while perusing a new Conan paperback, I noticed in L. Sprague de Camp's introduction the name and address of one Glenn Lord, listed as "literary agent for the estate of Robert E. Howard." On a whim, I sat down and addressed him a letter. Why not go for the Real McConan?

To my happy surprise, despite the meager payment we offered, Glenn saw virtue in my contention that such a comic would give Conan (and Robert E. Howard) exposure to many new readers. Indeed, I learned there'd been a few recent attempts to get a Conan comic off the ground — one by artist Gil Kane for his own company; and Glenn had once tried to interest Creepy, a horror black-and-white comic of the period. Neither effort had gotten far.

IV. "SHADOW-GUARDED TOMBS"

So Glenn accepted Marvel's offer — promptly facing me with

For, as the writer of AVENGERS, HULK, etc., I hadn't planned to script the CONAN title. I wasn't even a sword-and-sorcery fan, though by this time I'd finally read some of Howard's stories and found that I enjoyed the genre — at least when REH was writing

Only thing is, I'd got a bit carried away during my negotiations with Glenn Lord. Embarrassed at the paucity of the per-issue payment, I'd offered the REH estate a bit more money than I'd been authorized to - and I didn't want Martin Goodman to back out of the deal over it.

There was only one solution: I'd have to script at least the first issue, and be prepared to take the extra money off my own wages, if our publisher noticed the increase and objected.

Thus did I back-pedal and generally stumble my way into writing thousands of pages of Conan comic books, two years of a Conan newspaper comic-strip, a couple of Conan "dramatic-format" record albums, some Conan TV cartoons, and the first five drafts of the second Conan movie starring Arnold Schwarzeneg-

V. "HITHER CAME CONAN..."

In my own mind, there was never any question about the best title for the new comic, though CONAN THE BARBARIAN wasn't nearly as inevitable as it seems in retrospect.

Conan made his print debut in 1932, in the pulp magazine Weird Tales. By the time Howard took his own life in 1936, he had written about two dozen Conan stories, though a number of these would be published only decades after his death.

REH called his hero simply "Conan" or "Conan the Cimmerian," but never, to my knowledge, "Conan the Barbarian," with or without a capital "B."

In the 1950s Gnome Press, a small publishing house founded by Martin Greenberg, began reprinting the Conan adventures in a series of hardbound volumes — one of which was titled Conan the Barbarian. It was for Gnome that science-fiction/fantasy author Sprague de Camp was eventually asked to rewrite several of REH's non-Conan stories into tales of the Cimmerian, to squeeze another volume out of the series.

This, in turn, led to de Camp's packaging the Conan stories for a paperback company, Lancer Books, in the mid-60s. (It was then that Glenn Lord became the literary agent for the Howard estate, as de Camp wished to avoid a conflict of interest. As an REH fan, Glenn had assembled and published the first book of Howard's poetry, Always Comes Evening, in 1957.)

To avoid confusion with the seven Gnome books, Lancer avoided using their titles, and began its own series with Conan the Adventurer. Thus, when Marvel acquired rights, CONAN THE BARBARIAN was not a Lancer title, and anyway scant confusion was likely between the paperbacks and a comic book.

Por Roy Thomas.





Stan and I agreed at once on the perfect artist to illustrate young Conan's exploits.

His name? John Buscema.

VI. "SWORD IN HAND"

Big John was not only one of Marvel's most popular artists in 1970, but also (as he still is today) one of the best draftsmen the field had produced. We'd worked together on AVENGERS and SUB-MARINER, and I felt he was the ideal choice for Conan.

John loved the Conan books we sent him, and declared himself eager to be the artist of CONAN THE BARBARIAN. By now, I'd read the entire Conan canon and was hard at work on the plot for the first issue, when we crashed into a sudden and unexpected barrier.

Publisher Martin Goodman either hadn't noticed or hadn't cared that I'd exceeded the amount he'd agreed to offer the REH estate. However, he wanted to keep down expenses, since Marvel was paying a licensing fee for perhaps the first time since it put out TV-related mags like PINKY LEE COMICS and MY FRIEND IRMA in the 1950s. So we were forbidden to use an artist whose rate was naturally as high as Marvel was then paying.

Nor did John, understandably, feel like lowering his rate for the privilege of drawing CONAN. So he bowed out, and the search was on for a Conan artist.

VII. "GIGANTIC MELANCHOLIES. . ."

The economic factor likewise ruled out another distinct possibility: Gil Kane, who'd later become Marvel's second CONAN artist.

Contrary to what sometime Marvel scribe Ron Goulart has written in several comic book histories, it wasn't Gil, but the readers and our own instincts, that pushed Marvel into acquiring Conan. All the same, the erudite Gil, a friend since we'd done CAPTAIN MARVEL together, was a longtime admirer of REH's work. He even owned a complete collection of the Gnome Conans (which I soon purchased from him). But alas, his rate, too, ruled him out as artist, though he remained an unofficial advisor in the early days of CONAN THE BARBARIAN.

Next, Stan suggested two or three Bullpen regulars, but I didn't think they were right for the comic, which from the outset I envisioned as being a bit different from the other Marvel mags, much as I loved them.

One or two young Frazetta-influenced artists volunteered to draw CTB. One of them had already drawn an unsuccessful sword-and-sorcery hero for DC Comics. I liked these artists' work more than Stan did, but I shared his misgivings about how commercial their work was, at that point.

VIII. ". . . AND GIGANTIC MIRTH"

And then there was Barry Smith, whom I'd had in the back of my mind all along.

Two years earlier, the young Britisher had sent samples of his Kirby-inspired artwork to Marvel from London. It had shown enough promise for Stan to drop him a note saying, in essence, "If you're ever in New York, look us up."

Barry (with his friend Steve Parkhouse) must've hopped the next boat west, for he was soon knocking on our door. He was given some fill-in stories to do, including an X-MEN issue he considers the nadir of his career. (Small wonder! At the time, he had no apartment of his own, so he had to do his drawing on a park bench!) Soon, he was working first with Stan, then with me, on DAREDEVIL, doing a creditable job which showed considerable development as an artist.

But alas, we hadn't realized Barry was working for Marvel without benefit of a precious "green card." And so, one day, the

vigilant G-men gave him 24 hours to get not just out of town, but out of the country. Back to Britain he went, to begin anew the long, laborious process of returning to the U.S.

While he was doing off-and-on drawing for Marvel long-distance, he and I collaborated on a story featuring a sword-andsorcery hero called "Starr the Slayer" for our "mystery" title, CHAMBER OF DARKNESS. With an eye toward our doing another S&S feature somewhere, he'd also produced a number of exciting Conanesque drawings, one or two of which will be reprinted in forthcoming issues.

So Barry was, as the expression goes, "available." I.e., he was willing and eager to draw CONAN — and his rate, as a new-comer, was at the other end of the spectrum from Buscema's (not that the spectrum was all that wide, in those days). I airmailed him the plot for #1.

Though Conan wasn't a super hero, Stan, Barry, and I felt he should wear an outfit which had the slight feel of a "costume." Barry designed a colorful medallion, and the horned helmet was a natural (it was Barry's inspiration to place both horns in front, so that on occasion Conan looked like a charging bull).

IX. "TO TREAD THE JEWELED THRONES OF THE EARTH. . . "

My story — I was really just feeling my way along in #1 — established Conan in the barbarous north, though destined for more civilized climes. We didn't want a cast that looked like a bunch of landlocked Vikings, month after month; we wanted to see those "gleaming cities" REH had written about. I'd thrown in a mixture of Conanic elements — some barbarian foes, a shaman (the "sorcery" quota for the first issue), winged demons (the "monsters" I'd promised Martin Goodman), and even a beauti-

Por Roy Thomas.

ful girl.

In order to foreshadow Conan's long-term future, already known to prose readers, I also borrowed a bit from REH's stories of King Kull. Kull had dreamed, when young, of being a king. So I had a Vanir shaman show Conan images of the distant past (including Kull, who I hoped would soon get his own title) - and of

self being crowned king of some unnamed land at a later date. Still, if I had it to do over again, I might well have only the reader,

not Conan, see the shaman's images.

I also wanted to put the Hyborian Age in context, so the shaman's images moved on into actual history — first with Egypt's pyramids, then a startling jump to "man in space." Perhaps that last vision doesn't really belong in a sword-and-sorcery comic, but Conan is never fully aware of what he's seeing - and the shaman is driven mad by the sight.

Anyway, the plot, for better and/or worse, was my best effort at the time. (And, for a lark, we've had John Buscema redraw that very story this month in SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #222, just to show you — and ourselves — something roughly approximating what CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1 might have looked like if Big John had drawn it for that October 1970 cover-date.)

Barry now had the plot, so the only thing to do was to wait eagerly and anxiously for his pencils to arrive in New York.

X. ". . . UNDER HIS SANDALED FEET"

When they did, Stan and I liked a lot of what Barry had drawn. In the margin alongside the pencil-art of the Cimmerian's birth on a battlefield, Barry had even drawn a humorous picture of "Baby Conan" wielding a sword instead of a rattle. (If only we'd photostatted it at the time!)

Still, we felt - as did Barry - that he'd "frozen up" a bit, and that not all the art was up to the standards of his earlier Conanlike illustrations. All the same, it was a good start. Besides, the inker was to be Dapper Dan Adkins, a fine embellisher of the

Wally Wood school.

Barry's splash page showed Conan turning and drawing his sword — which led into Page 2, whereon he was looking down from a cliff at a clash 'twixt Aesir and Vanir. To acclimate the reader to the Hyborian Age, and to heighten the action, we asked Barry to draw a new "symbolic" splash — and to add a new Page 2, showing Conan, already a part of the Aesir war-band, fighting an individual Vanir. This pushed his jump off the cliff back to Page 3 — and also put us one page over-length.

So we shelved a good but unnecessary fight page near issue's

end - actually, the bottom half of one page, the top half of another, between where Conan runs for the Star-Stone and where he hurls it. Out went one out-and-out Cimmerian uppercut that Barry would never have drawn even a few weeks later.

Frankly, I'd long thought that both those pages were forever - till a browse through the program book produced for the 1975 Marvel Comics Convention in New York made me realize both those penciled pages had been printed in a 1970 issue of MARVELMANIA, the Marvel-sponsored fanzine of the time!

Fortunately, TV and comics writer Mark Evanier of Los Angeles, who was MARVELMANIA's editor during his misspent youth, graciously supplied us with copies of both CTB #1 pages! Thanks a million, Mark. You've helped us make CONAN CLAS-SIC #1 the equivalent of all those movies-on-video coming out these days with "lost" footage restored. All 21 pages of CTB #1 ever penciled are now present and accounted for gathered together for the first time ever!

Onward: Titling the story "The Coming of Conan" after another Gnome volume, I next wrote the script, naming the shaman's slave Tara, after my kid sister. If anyone's vaguely curious concerning a few lines I've wanted to rewrite for 24 years, just compare CONAN CLASSIC #1 with the Buscema redrawing in SAV-AGE SWORD #222. I'd like to think I got better as I went along.

We got good notices, though, from the REH aficionados to whom we sent photostats of the finished #1: science-fiction author Harlan Ellison; Glenn Lord; SF fans Don and Maggie Thompson; SF writers/editors Ted White and Dick Lupoff; and Arkham House publisher August Derleth, whose 1946 anthology Skull-face and Others had been the first collection of Howard's fiction. These mini-reviews were printed in the second issue's "Hyborian Page.

Nor does it let any cats out of the bag to reveal that Barry was destined, very quickly, to prove both to us and to comics fans everywhere that he was never again going to be anybody's second choice. If you don't believe us, stick around for CONAN CLASSIC #2, "The Lair of the Beast-Men," and the issues

beyond!

Barry would go on to help make CONAN THE BARBARIAN a highlight of 1970s comics, and himself one of the most respected and imitated comics artists of the period.

Sometimes, in spite of everything, things work out for the best.

NEXT: BALLOTS AND BEAST-MEN!

The CONAN CLASSIC series is dedicated to Glenn Lord, the man without whom there would have been no Marvel Conan.





AN ON-GOING HISTORY OF CONAN THE BARBARIAN BY ROY THOMAS

OF BEARS AND BEAST-MEN

Last time out, we dealt with the trials and tribulations of launching CONAN THE BARBARIAN as a Marvel comic in 1970. By #2 (cover-dated December 1970, but actually on sale by late summer), many of the major problems had been solved.

We had the perfect title (which we'll abbreviate as CTB, to avoid confusion with our new title, CONAN THE ADVENTURER, or even CONAN CLASSIC itself). Naturally, we had no idea how well the mag would sell, and wouldn't for months; there was no so-called "direct market" or comic-book stores in 1970.

By now, though I'd read all of Robert E. Howard's Conan stories, I was still undecided whether or not to turn the scripting reins over to someone else, probably fledgling writer Gerry Cornway.

As for Barry, whether he suspected it or not, his continued tenure as CTB's penciler was a bit shakier, hard as it may be to believe in retrospect. Despite the undeniable virtues of #1, we felt a need to see an improvement in the art of #2; else I'd probably have to give in and accept, by #3, a second-string Marvel regular as CTB's artist.

Fortunately, when the nineteen pages of penciled artwork for #2 arrived from London's East End, it erased all doubts. I felt vindicated in pushing for Barry, and from that instant all thoughts I'd had of turning CTB over to another writer simply faded away.

But, to backtrack for a moment-

"The Lair of the Beast-Men" was inspired by two paragraphs in REH's pseudo-historical essay, "The Hyborian Age," printed in the paperback volume entitled simply Conan.

"At the time of the Cataclysm," it reads, referring to the sinking of Atlantis thousands of years before Conan's time, "a band of savages, whose development was not much above that of the Neanderthal, fled to the north to escape destruction. They found the snow-countries inhabited only by a species of ferocious snowapes— huge, shaggy, white animals, apparently native to that climate. These they fought and drove beyond the Arctic Circle, to perish, as the savages thought."

2000 years later, as the Hyborians were starting to push their way south, "a wanderer into the far North returned with the news that the supposedly deserted ice wastes were inhabited by an extensive tribe of apelike men, descended, he swore, from the beasts driven out of the more habitable land by the ancestors of the Hyborians. He urged that a large war-party be sent beyond the Arctic Circle to exterminate these beasts, whom he swore were evolving into true men. He was jeered at; a small band of adventurous young warriors followed him into the North, but none returned."

These events, according to REH's essay, are still five millennia before Conan's time, but they suggested a storyline for an early CTB story. I wanted to establish the Cimmerian in the wild north, then quickly bring him south. It was, after all, the contrast of the barbarian among civilized men and cities which gave Howard's creation much of its evocative power. And, having made other barbarians his main opponents (admittedly, along with bat-winged demons) in #1, I wanted a different foe for his second outing.

Besides, I'd promised Martin Goodman and Stan Lee lots of monsters in CTB. What better way to deliver than with a race of man-apes as both villains and monsters— especially since apes were a staple of REH's Conan tales ("Rogues in the House," "Shadows in the Moonlight," "Queen of the Black Coast," and even a chapter of the novel Conan the Conqueror— have I left any

So I plotted a story which assumed the forementioned war-party had been captured by these mysterious man-apes, thousands of years earlier, and had been interbred with later captives of the female persuasion to form a slave race. Naturally, Conan soon roused the "manlings" to rebel against their anthropoid masters.

As I said above, when Barry's pencils for #2 arrived, Stan and I were elated, for every page seemed at least as good as the very best pages of #1. There was only one problem:

Though Barry had followed the plot's action faithfully, he had made one embellishment which, in many ways, turned the concept on its head. The plot had called for the man-apes to dwell in a subterranean "city" no more advanced than those of the northern tribes. They'd be clothed and armored, yes, but only in a primitive way. Barry had upgraded the Beast-Men's level of civilization to rival at least the lesser Hyborian kingdoms, in a way I hadn't envisioned, and in a way it's hard to believe Robert E. Howard would have done.

What Barry had done, of course, was to subconsciously after a Howardian concept into one which owed more to Edgar Rice Burroughs, creator of Tarzan and various "scientific romances." ERB had been a tremendous influence on REH, but still, Conan's world was not that of Lord Greystoke or John Carter of Mars or David Innes of Pellucidar.

However, comic-books, like politics, is the art of the possible. We had this lovely artwork, it told the basic story, and it would make a good comic book. I prepared to write it as it was, as soon as our publisher had approved the pencils.

That's when we struck yet another reef, hidden beneath the surface.

Word came down that Martin Goodman, on seeing the pencils, was unhappy with the splash page. Why? Because it depicted Conan crouched over the carcass of— a sizable bear.

Bears, our esteemed publisher declared, were not what Marvel's readers paid to see. They wanted to see the man-apes, and so did he— and that included on the splash page! Lose the bear, he ordered, and draw a dead man-ape there instead.

I argued (politely) that it would be anticlimactic to introduce a Beast-Man on the very first page, already slain by our hero; it would beg the question of how Conan would fare in the battles to come. Besides, it was that bear's hide which Conan wore on Page 2; on the original splash, he was bare-backed, and had killed the bruin for its fur.

Goodman was adamant. Out with the bear, in with the manape. I bit my tongue and got to work as associate editor, undoing some of my work as writer (and neglecting to make a copy of the page as it looked with the bear, since we didn't have easy access to photostat machines in 1970, hard as it is to believe).

Barry dutifully substituted a dead, club-wielding man-ape for the bear, and draping Conan's shoulders in an already-acquired bearskin. I had to explain in clumsy captions that the man-ape had charged him, etc., and that Conan had acquired the fur-cape from a "wandering warrior" two days earlier.

Despite the above snags, the story proved a considerable success to us, from an aesthetic viewpoint.

For one thing, Barry's art had a wonderful feel. For another, not only were the ape and city design and the action scenes all we'd hoped for, but Barry had given me a fine page for the dialogue I wanted between Conan and the chief of the enslaved manlings. (As usual, there are things I wish I could re-write in CTB #2, but Page 11 isn't one of them.)

Though John Verpoorten had done an admirable job inking Barry's penciled cover for CTB #1, Barry did full art chores on #2's cover—though I have a lingering suspicion that Conan's torso may have been altered by someone, perhaps Herb Trimpe, at the direction of Stan or Goodman.

Barry volunteered something rather unusual at Marvel— he drew a half-page ad for CTB #2, which appeared in Decemberdated issues of HULK, CAPTAIN AMERICA, etc. We've reproduced CONAN CLASSIC 2 (JULHO DE 1994), "CONAN THE MARVELOUS" (CONTINUAÇÃO)

Por Roy Thomas.

it below, for the first time since 1970. (Even Ye Writer got into the act, by personally lettering the words "Conan in chains— but still Conan!"— albeit with a very shaky hand.)

I even had a bit of fun naming one man-ape "Har-Lann," after Harlan Ellison, the gifted science-fiction author who was one of seven professionals whose comments in #2's "Hyborian Page" re #1 helped wish the good ship CONAN THE BARBARIAN bon voyage. (Admittedly, I'd hedged our bets: along with photostats of #1, I'd sent our guest commentators copies of Barry's pencils for #2, as well.)

When Dan Adkins bowed out as inker, we tapped John Buscema's brother Sal, who'd not yet made a name for himself as a penciler, but whose happy association with CTB would last for two years— and Sam Rosen made the lettering a pleasure to read, as always. Coloring was doubtless by either Marie Severin or Stan Goldberg, who did virtually all Maryel's mags at that time.

Moreover, "Lair of the Beast-Men" would soon be one of five stories nominated as the "Year's Best" by the brand new Academy of Comic-Book Arts, which was composed of most of the major comics professionals. Higher praise we couldn't have desired.

And, just to round things off, I was nominated as "Best Writer" for '70 (the other two nominees were Dennis O'Neil and some guy named Stan Lee), and Barry was nominated (opposite Gerry Conway and Berni Wrightson) in the category of "Outstanding New Talent." Barry won, anyway. Probably because only two issues had come out with 1970 cover dates, CONAN THE BARBARIAN was not nominated as best continuing feature; we'd remedy that in '71.

Of course, the Shazams, as ACBA's awards were called, were still months in the future when CTB #2 hit the stands, but we knew things were looking up.

[NOTE: As a special treat, we've also reprinted the pen-and-ink illustration Barry Windsor-Smith did in 1987 for CONAN SAGA #1, since that issue reprinted CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1-3, and his drawing was meant to catch the mood of those early tales, as Barry saw them nearly two decades later. The artwork had to be trimmed a bit on SAGA's cover, and only printed in its entirety (but in black-and-white) on the inside front cover, so this is its first full rendering in color.]

NEXT TIME: ZUKALA VS. THE GRIM GREY GOD

CONAN THE ADVENTURER #2: New hit series! The young Cimmerian encounters a rampaging horde of Vanir— and Snow That Eats People! Trust us— this is one Winter Wonderland you don't want to go walking in! By Roy Thomas and Rafael Kayanan.

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #223: A Stygian sorcerer named Nekht Semerkeht commands "The Feeders from the Skies"— and guess who's the Next Designated Meal! By Roy Thomas and Alfredo Alcala, based on a tale by REH. Plus— Conan and Red Sonja imprisoned inside the Mirrors of Tuzun Thune, in our "Conan the Barbarian" chapter, with art by Mike Docherty and E.R. Cruz.

CONAN SAGA #88: To put Belit back on her rightful throne, Conan must face "Vengeance in Asgalun"— then "He Who Waits in the Well of Skelos"! By Roy Thomas, John Buscema, and Ernie Chan. Plus— amid Frank Thorne art, Red Sonja faces "The Demon of the Maze."

Rafael Kayanan's cover to CONAN THE ADVENTURER #2 ON SALE





A ONGOING HISTORY OF CONAN THE BARBARIAN BY ROY THOMAS

ON THE WINGS OF A SNOW-WHITE HORSE

In early 1970 artist Barry Smith - still languishing in Londontown following the skirmish with American authorities over his lack of a "green card" — air-mailed in the pencils for the bimonthly CONAN THE BARBARIAN #3.

Its title: "Zukala's Daughter."

What? You say that's not the name of the story reprinted in this

issue of CONAN CLASSICS? Very observant.

That's because I'd decided, both as writer and as Marvel's #2 editor, that that tale would fit better a bit later in the chronology. So I moved it, and it will be re-presented in CONAN CLASSICS

A few weeks later, our hard-working young Britisher delivered his fourth Conan story: "The Tower of the Elephant", our first one based on one of Robert E. Howard's actual stories. It, too, was put

on the shelf — to become CTB #4.

Up till now, all the Conan stories plotted had been either original adventures (#1, #2, and even "Zukala's Daughter", though I took the villain's name from a poem by REH) — or else based on an actual Conan story ("Tower of the Elephant"). Both the poem and "Tower" had been utilized by special arrangement with Glenn Lord, literary agent for the REH estate, since our contract enabled Marvel to use Conan, but not any specific REH material.

At the same time, I'd been intrigued by the fact that, for the hardbound book Tales of Conan, published by Gnome Press in 1955, fantasy author L. Sprague de Camp had mildly re-written several stories of REH's which dealt with other heroes and historical eras, turning them into Conan exploits; these were also utilized in the

1960s Lancer paperbacks.

This had mostly meant merely changing a few names, eliminating modern references, and working in a supernatural element so the finished product would indeed be "sword-and-sorcery". De Camp

did it well — and I wanted to try the same approach.

Not to save time, let alone money — because by the time I'd read one or more REH stories to find one suitable for a given spot in CONAN THE BARBARIAN, I could just as easily have plotted a brand-new tale. But I enjoyed working with Howard's prose, which I wanted to introduce (even in adulterated form) to comics readers.

I had become — not a sword-and-sorcery fan, but a Robert E.

Howard fan.

REH had been a prolific writer from the 1920s till his death in 1936. Before Conan he had created King Kull, Solomon Kane, and most

of the other heroes now associated with his name.

One of his earlier stories, "The People of the Dark", even starred a "Conan of the Reavers," who was not the later Cimmerian — while another featured a young serf named Conn (a variant of the name "Conan") who escapes from his masters in chains and takes part in the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. This battle, in which King Brian Boru supposedly "drove the Danes out of Ireland", is well-known in Irish history, though the events as handed down may be both less factual and less important than tradition holds.

In the interest of selling to Weird Tales, the magazine where his Conan tales appeared, REH added a hint of the supernatural by having the fettered Conn encounter a grayish personage who is clearly a god, come to earth with his valkyrie-like "Choosers of the Slain" to gather up those who die in battle onto the backs of their

winged stallions.

REH's story, "The Twilight of the Grey Gods", was rejected by Weird Tales' editor and was only published in 1962, in the anthology Dark Mind, Dark Heart, edited by August Derleth for Arkham House, under the title "The Grey God Passes".

Strangely enough, Howard wrote a slightly different, evidently earlier version of the same tale, minus the Grey God, and titled it

"Spears of Clontarf."

By spring of 1970 I'd acquired copies of virtually all REH's work published to that date, plus much unpublished material sent to me by Glenn Lord. "The Grey God Passes" intrigued me, partly because I wanted CTB #3 to showcase Conan as an escapee from Hyperboreans, as maintained by various posthumous commentators on the Conan stories, but I wanted to get him to more civilized climes. (If Howard himself mentions this Hyperborean slave-pen episode, its source eludes me at the moment.)

Besides the plotline and some beautiful prose — especially the tirades of the "Grey God" — the story is crammed with intriguing characters, such as the temptress Kormlada — almost too many to keep track of, but I wanted to see what Barry would do with the whole thing. Making a few minor changes to fit the events into Conan's life, and changing Broder to Tomar, I wrote a synopsis, advising Barry what to emphasize. I also sent him a copy of "Grey God", for general inspiration.

The result was nineteen pages of pencils from Barry which really knocked me out - and would have made an even stronger impression if I hadn't seen "The Tower of the Elephant" first. (By the way, at this time, we were having the artists draw one page in each issue which could be cut in two. That way the books' pages would still be numbered from 1 to 20 during an economy move. It was a policy

that, thankfully, didn't last long.)

Writing CTB #3 was pure pleasure, and it seems to me that it holds up well after nearly a quarter of a century. Much of that is due to our close adherence to REH's original. I split the difference of the two titles, and called our effort. The Twilight of the Grim

Grey God".

Once again Sal Buscema inked. After the relatively simple CTB #2, John's baby brother must have begun to wonder what he'd gotten himself into! CTB #3 was the first that he or the readers would see which reflected Barry's growing attention to detail and his devotion to an art-nouveau style. Kormlada's tiara alone probably required more India ink than did many entire comic-book panels of the period!

Because Barry was still in England, staff artist Marie Severin (no mean slouch herself as a Marvel artist) did a cover sketch for the issue, which we whisked to him. We've reprinted it in this issue, adding color, so it can be compared to Barry's finished cover. Of course, Marie wasn't trying to do a full cover, only a sketch, but it's

still interesting in its own right.

To round out CTB #3, we printed a half-page of excerpts from the mostly-favorable mail on #1, and the map Barry had done for

In this issue of CONAN CLASSICS, along with Marie's sketch we've reprinted one of the powerful Conanesque illustrations Barry had done before he got the assignment to draw CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1. I think this drawing alone will show you why I was always enthusiastic about Barry becoming the CONAN artist.

And all the while, I knew that the best was yet to come. . . only sixty days away then, only thirty days away now, when we enter the

Tower of the Elephant!

NEXT TIME: FIRST STOPOVER IN THE CITY OF THIEVES

OUR CIMMERIAN CHECKLIST OF CONAN MAGS NOW ON SALE:

CONAN THE ADVENTURER #3: A starting new sequel to "The Twilight of the Grim Grey God!" Conan is caught between warring factions in the aftermath of the Battle for Brythunia- one of which controls an indestructible Golem! An instant milestone by Roy Thomas and Rafael Kayanan.

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #224: "The Dwellers under the Tombsi* Conan helps bury a man, only this one returns as a vampire- and that's just the good news! By Roy Thomas and John Watkiss. Plus- Conan and Red Sonja, trapped in the Cretaceous Era by dinosaurs that eat Stephen Spielberg for breakfast- our latest "Conan the Barbarian" chapter, drawn by Mike Docherty and E.R. Cruz.

CONAN SAGA #89: A barbarian in Stygial Conan and Belit assail the Black Walls of Khemi- the Hawk-Riders of Harakhtand a giant who dwarfs even our redoubtable Cimmerian- in four landmark tales by Roy Thomas, John Buscema, and Ernie Chan.

CONAN CLASSIC 3 (AGOSTO DE 1994), EDITORIAL "THIS IS WHERE I CAME IN..."

Reprodução do artigo de Richard Ashford.

THIS IS WHERE I CAME IN...

Issue #3 was the first CONAN THE BARBARIAN that I read, it was also the first one I saw. I bought it from a second-hand book store in Greenwich, London, England that is. The memory is still pretty vivid which might go somewhere in showing you what an impression the book had on me. I couldn't put it down! I started to read it the moment I left the shop, a bad habit that will one day, no doubt, kill me.

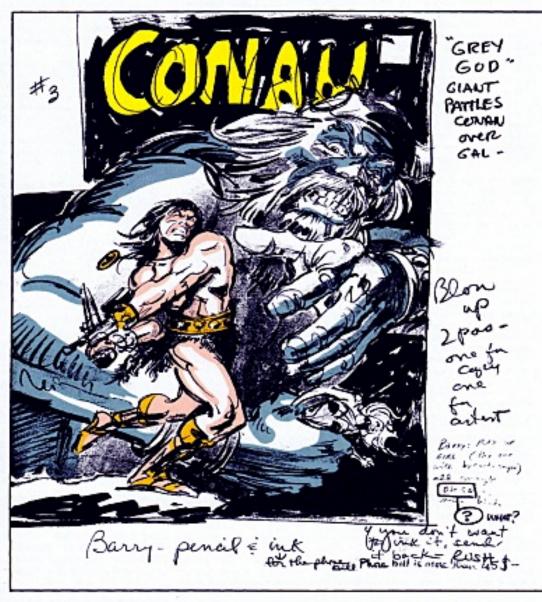
By this time I had been hooked on comics, Marvel in particular, for coming up to ten years, CONAN THE BARBARIAN was just so different. The story was great; with its mixture of swords, sorcery and the passing gods was gripping, intriguing, full of pathos, the ending so touching. The art was beautiful, fragile and delicate, the story-telling and attention to detail was fresh and exciting, some of the pages seemed like collages of the event, frozen moments in people's lives. Not only that, it also opened up the whole sword and sorcery genre to me, and Robert E. Howard in particular.

I was to read Conan's comic exploits (not the humorous kind) for many more years, and CONAN THE BARBARIAN #3 remains one of my favorites. How I went from reading Conan in London to editing Conan in New York is, I guess, another story.

BY CROM RICHARD

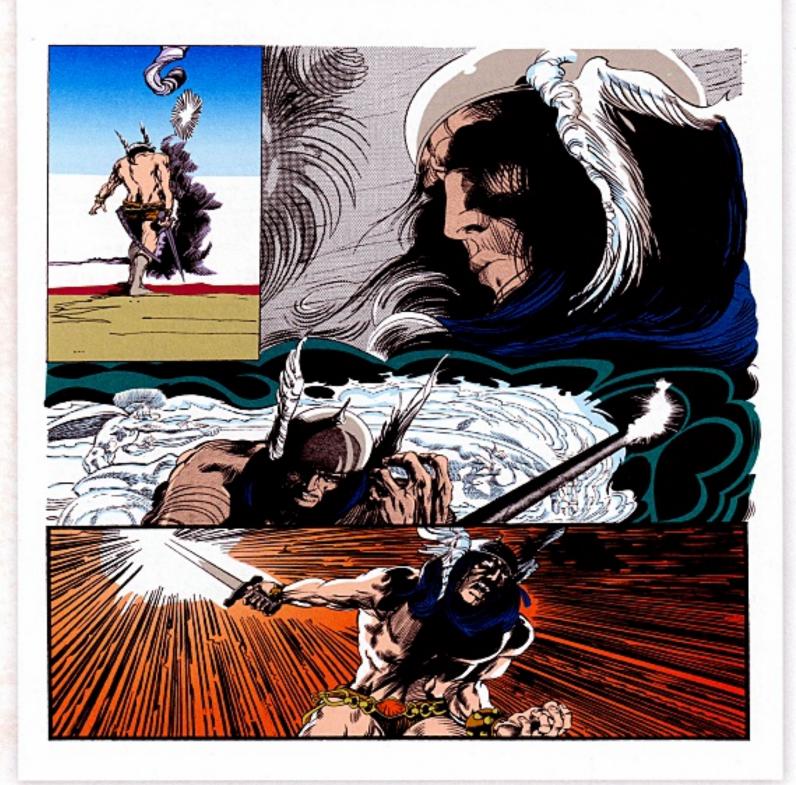


Marie Severin's cover sketch to CONAN THE BARBARIAN #3, complete with notes regarding the phone bills for trans-atlantic phone calls to Barry.



A rare look provided by Barry Windsor-Smith of an outtake from the original art to CONAN THE BARBARIAN #3. Even before circumstances made him the penciler of CONAN THE BARBARIAN, Barry Windsor-Smith and Roy Thomas were fooling around with sword-and-sorcery ideas, hoping to develop one either for Marvel or in a paperback original along the lines of Gil Kane's ground-breaking BLACKMARK graphic novel. This 1969/1970 illustration by Barry could be Conan-- or Kull-- or Thongor-- or even Starr the Slayer, the hero they'd done for an earlier Marvel mag. Since Conan was its main

influence, it can be considered Barry's earliest extant Conan drawing. As to what Barry had in mind: well, maybe Conan's brooding about how to get his straight sword into his curved scabbard, and that's what makes him angry enough to take a backhanded stab at the Apollonic charioteer behind him-- if that's what he's doing. No matter. This beautiful illo should suffice to explain why Barry became CONAN THE BARBARIAN's first artist!



THE HUBORIAN PAGE

RICHARD ASHFORD EDITOR MICHAEL KRAIGER ASSISTANT EDITOR
4'0 MARYSL COMICS, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 100%

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that info by request

Reader reaction to CONAN CLASSIC #1 is beginning to trickle in— and yes, Venarium, there will be a CONAN CLASSIC letters section, mixed in with our informal history of Marvel's Conan. If you write 'em, we'll print 'em, starting with:

Dear Richard.

Thanks so much for CONAN CLASSIC #1. Not only does this magazine show Marvel's dedication to preserving the best of yesteryear; this series will be a valuable tool in my crash course on Conan. Robert E. Howard's pulp hero is reaching more audiences than ever with the "Conan the Adventurer" cartoon series, and his four comic magazines are as wonderful as ever.

First, though, a tip of the hat to Roy Thomas. Not only is he a polite fellow and very enthusiastic about Conan's future, if a recent comics store signing he did says anything about him, but he's a master writer. His three-page, ten-part piece on Conan comics history was every bit as interesting as the actual story. A text page in pre-letter-column issues shows dedication, Richard. I hope to see regular letters pages, too, something most reprint books don't have lately. Who's to say that a person shouldn't comment on something 24 years old? Not me!

"The Coming of Conan," of course, was a great story worthy of the accolades bestowed upon it. This series will be a great companion to CONAN THE ADVENTURER, since this Conan is also young and inexperienced. While I'm still not as comfortable with the sword-and-sorcery genre as I am with super heroes, Roy's lyrical prose was great. And the plot, "for better and/or worse," is definitely darned good storytelling. Since I haven't read those early CONAN THE BARBARIAN issues, I hope a strong supporting cast was built up to give me more of a flavor of the era we're reading about.

As this series progresses, will you reprint Conan-related stories, like maybe an issue of KING KULL or whatever, if the piece is vital to continuity?

Then there's Barry Windsor-Smith's art. If this work was "frozen up," in Roy's and Stan's and Barry's opinion, they're all crazy! Showing more indications of Mr. Smith's style today, the pages are lovingly rendered and explicitly detailed. And let me take a moment to say that you've made the original CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1 cover seem new again. If only Marvel's other reprint books tried this, rather than hiring new cover artists and then having to reprint the original cover in the back! The new logo and coloring really did this piece justice.

Thanks again for the time and care in producing CONAN CLAS-SIC.

> Joey Marchese P.O. Box 2197 Union, NJ 07083-2197

Obviously, Joey, CONAN CLASSIC has been intended from the start as more than just a reprint comic slapped together with little or no care. One aspect of things, however, displeased one otherwise ecstatic reader. To wit:

Dear CONAN CLASSIC.

I want to thank everyone for beginning to reprint the earlier Conan stories. I grew up with these, and I think it is super to have a chance to see these marvelous tales with awesome Barry Windsor-Smith artwork printed on much better paper. I'm sure younger generations are thankful, too, for being able to enjoy these stories of Conan's youth. However, I find it hard to believe we're going to reread these comics with such poor coloring. The cover looked so great with the new coloring that I had my hopes for the same in the interior, but I was greatly disappointed. Even if this was the original coloring, let's get rid of it! With Page 7 I felt like I was reading "Beetle Bailey" with the bright yellow and green panel backgrounds. Heck, Gladstone's DONALD DUCK is colored with more love and skill!

Conan and Barry Windson-Smith deserve better.

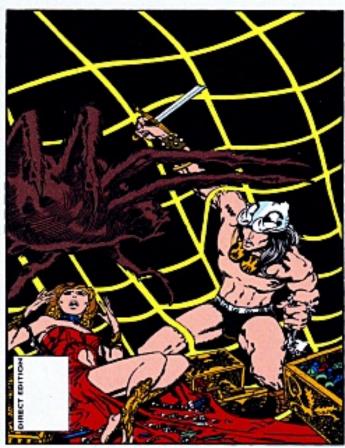
Jeff A. Glandt 3829 Elm Avenue Rapid City, SD 57701

We'd love to see the interiors re-colored, as well, Jeff, even in cases where the original met your (and our) belated approval. However, budgetary restrictions prevent our generally having more than the cover re-colored at present. Happily, most readers weren't bothered by the old coloring as you were.

And, just to confuse things further—Barry Windsor-Smith himself told us he liked the original coloring of the cover better than the re-do on CONAN CLASSIC #1! That what makes race-horses of a different color, at least for—

-Richard, Michael, and Roy.

NEXT ISSUE



AN ONGOING HISTORY OF MARVEL'S "CONAN THE BARBARIAN" COMICS

THE HOUR OF THE ELEPHANT

I'll confess it right up front: Robert E. Howard's "The Tower of the Elephant" is my favorite Conan story, and has been ever since I first read it, nearly a quarter of a century ago.

It's also the earliest chronological tale REH ever wrote about the stalwart Cimmerian, and the first to appear in which Conan was not king of Aquilonia.

It was likewise the very first actual REH material Barry (Windson) Smith and I adapted into comics form, since, as stated in CONAN CLASSIC #3, "The Twilight of the Grim Grey God", based on a non-Conan story of Howard's, was drawn later.

It's even the only REH Conan tale I adapted twice — first with Barry in CONAN THE BARBARIAN #4, later in a longer form with John Buscema in SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #24 (reprinted in CONAN SAGA #18) — and it's the only REH Conan exploit I worked into the "Conan the Barbarian" newspaper comic-strip from 1978 to 1981, with art by Rudy Nebres, Pablo Marcos, and Alan Kupperberg.

Yet, with all that talent involved — and though I was the editor as well as scripter of all three — I never really succeeded in getting any artist to visualize Yag-Kosha, the captive alien in the wizard Yara's tower, quite the way I believe REH meant him to look. I'm not even sure I ever tried.

Maybe that's understandable. After all, when Yag-Kosha was first pictured in the March 1933 issue of Weird Tales, accompaying the prose story's debut, the artist there set the pattern by drawing him'it as essentially a man with the head of a small elephant.

But I don't think that's not really what REH had in mind.

Here's how Conan's creator described him, as first seen by the young barbarian, who thinks for a moment that the thing he sees is an unliving carved idol:

"The image had the body of a man, naked, and green in color; but the head was one of nightmare and madness. Too large for the human body, it had no attributes of humanity. Conan stared at the wide flaring ears, the curling proboscis, on either side of which stood white tusks tipped with round golden balls. The eyes were closed, as if in sleep.

"This, then, was the reason for the name, the Tower of the Elephant, for the head of the thing was much like that of the beasts described by the Shemitish wanderer" — from whom Conan had first heard of an elephant, which he had never seen at this time.

Yes, one can simply draw an elephant's head on a man's body, and it will fit REH's description of Yag-Kosha.

But one could also depict "wide flaring ears" which would vaguely suggest an elephant's and yet have quite a different shape — and a "curling proboscis" which would look more like a squid's tentacle or Crom knows what — and even "white tusks" that curved, if at all, in some different way from those of an elephant. After all, Yag-Kosha came from another star.

Anyway, enough about Yag, who was perhaps inspired by some combination of the historical "elephant man" of recent stage and cinematic success, and the elephant-headed Hindu god Ganesha.

I hope nothing written above will indicate that I was anything other than absolutely enchanted with Barry's pencils of CONAN THE BARBARIAN #4, from the moment they first arrived from England in late 1970.

In fact, I can still remember spreading out the original art on my living room floor and writing the first page out in long hand on the original art in pencil — a trait I'd picked up from head honcho Stan Lee, who, though he merely indicated balloon placement on later pages, always scribbled out the title and exact copy on a story's splash page, to get a clear idea of how much room the dialogue and captions would take.

I remember making certain that the three white-area captions I placed atop Panels 1-3 on Page 1 were of the same length, so that the tops of those panels would form a straight line across the page.

Barry, of course, had worked from two sources on this issue: a copy of REH's original story, and a several-page synopsis I wrote dealing with scenes to emphasize, material to skip in the interests of space, etc. Barry, in turn, expanded upon this in notes in the margins of his art. Most of the pacing was left to Barry, for whose storytelling talents I already had a great respect.

Barry added one minor story point: On Page 5, he showed Yara entering the tower, since otherwise he wouldn't be seen till near story's end. Barry depicted Yara walking with his feet inches off the ground; this addition seemed fine with me.

BY ROY THOMAS

I played around with things a bit, as well. The change I'm proudest of — and Barry seemed happy about this, as well, in retrospect — is that I switched the order on Page 2 of Panels 7 and 8. It seemed better to have Conan's first appearance be the scene in which the would-be kidnapper looks up at him, framed in concentric circles of torchlight, rather than the medium shot in which we see Conan almost from behind.

The artwork, as I've said, enthralled me from start to finish:

The tavern scene, the first ever depicted in a Conan comic (though far from the last!), set the standard for all that have come since; while perhaps equaled, it's never been bettered.

The tower itself, its sides embedded with fabulous jewels, was not only beautiful in its own right, but introduced what became a Barry Smith mainstay in issues to come: When, in the final panel on Page 8, Conan stands in front of a gem-studded wall whose myriad shapes seem somehow to radiate out from him to indicate his surprise, Barry broke with the Kirbyesque tradition of simple straight lines to indicate shock — and he continued to use such patterns to show excitement for the rest of his artistic tenure on the mag.

And when, on Page 17, Barry used a lovely black-and-white pattern in a panel of Conan descending interior stairs, I broke with another pattern by not placing any copy in that panel or the next. Not a big step for mankind or anything like it, but a bit unusual in a Marvel comic in the first decade after FANTASTIC FOUR #1.

Meanwhile, Stan and I had been good-naturedly sparring over exactly what the term "sword-and-sorcery" meant. He didn't know, and I couldn't enlighten him. I'd promised that, when an issue of CONAN THE BARBARIAN seemed to me to fit that definition 100%, I'd point it out to him.

So, when the first printed copy of CTB #4 came in, I dropped it in Stan's in-box, and waited. Soon, Stan emerged, smiling sheepishly, to say, "So that's sword-and-sorcery." When I said yes, he opined as how it was a beautiful book and all, but it just wasn't his cup of tea.

Naturally, I was crushed, since I considered both Barry's artwork (as painstakingly inked by Sal Buscema) and the text as written by REH and myself to be — well, let's just say "above average."

I finally figured out what it was that dampened Stan's enthusiasm: Not only is there a relatively quiet, almost subdued feel to the story — despite one dead kidnaper (killed in the dark!), several dead lions, and a deceased giant spider — but, because we followed Howard's story closely, Conan himself is involved in the latter part of the story almost as a spectator. After he mercy-kills Yag-Kosha, he simply places a mystic gem before the sorcerer Yara; Yag does the rest, and Conan has little to do but flee the beautifully collapsing tower.

All the same, Stan appreciated the work that went into CONAN THE BARBARIAN, and was always a big booster of Barry's talent.

And when, early in 1972, the nominations for awards by the industry's professional society, the Academy of Comic Book Arts, were announced, "The Tower of the Elephant" was one of five nominees for "best story"; happily, CTB #6's offering, "Devil-Wings over Shadizar", was another, out of only six issues of CONAN THE BARBARIAN published during calendar year 1971. The two tales split the vote, and another nominee won, but Barry and I were pleased by the recognition.

Now if we could only be certain the mag was actually going to self —!

But that's another story, and one which we'll tell another time. Meanwhile, Richard and I hope you enjoy Barry's and my version of "The Tower of the Elephant".

Right now, I'm going to go back and read the comics adaptation of "The Tower of the Elephant" again, and maybe Robert E. Howard's original tale, as well.

Either one of them is my idea of a good time — and, I hope, of yours.

Next: ZUKALA'S DOGGEREL

The following pages offer some early examples of the fine illustration quality that Barry Windsor-Smith brought to his comic book work.

The first page was the cover to KING SIZE CONAN #1, and the next served as endpiece for a Giant Sized Treasury Edition.

AN ONGOING HISTORY OF MARVEL'S "CONAN THE BARBARIAN" COMICS BY ROY THOMAS

ZUKALA AND DAUGHTER

As I mentioned two issues back, "Zukala's Daughter" was the third adventure plotted by Yours Truly and penciled by Barry (Windsor-) Smith for the then-new CONAN THE BARBAR-IAN color comic book back in 1970.

However, somewhere along the way, I decided that if I dropped the fifth story penciled, "The Twilight of the Grim Grey God," into the #3 spot, leaving #4's "Tower of the Elephant" where it was, and moved "Zukala" back to #5, the world would be a better place.

For the life of me, I can't be 100% sure which came first—the idea for the tale, or the decision to turn Robert E. Howard's name "Zukala" into the name of a sorcerer. The credit I wrote says the story was "inspired by the poem "Zukala's Hour' by Robert E. Howard, creator of Conan," so that's probably the way it was. Not that it really matters.

In fact, for some reason, I remember less about the actual conceptualization and plotting of this issue than about most of the other early CTB's. I do know that the exact title was suggested by Nathaniel Hawthome's classic short story, "Rapuccini's Daughter," a tale of a scientist with a daughter who turns out to be, quite literally, poison. But I took nothing else from Hawthorne, so I might just as easily have gained my inspiration from the movie "Dracula's Daughter."

(Matter of fact, I've long thought that "Rapuccini's Daughter" would work well as the springboard for an actual Conan exploit, and one of these fine days, nearly a quarter of a century later.

later. . . .)

I do know that I was happy with the result. This follow-up of Barry's to "Lair of the Beast-Men" indicated his ever-greater feeling for REH's Hyborian Age, even if Zukala himself looked (and perhaps even spoke) a bit more like a Steve Ditko super-villain than anything we'd ever do again in a Conan comic. But ah, there's that beautiful pure-Barry scene of Zukala, hearing unhappy news, crushing a bird he has been holding gently in his hand — a sequence I've seen copied a time or three since.

We documented back in CONAN SAGA #75 that two few story changes were made near story's end prior to inking:

(1) On the second-from-last page, Barry had penciled a sequence wherein Conan slices at the demon Jaggta-Noga with an ase and knocks him out a window — so that he falls to his doom. But not only had Jaggta-Noga been shown to be almost indestructible, but he could fly! In a note in the border of the original pencils, Barry realized the inherent paradox, for he wrote: "Losing balance — too exhausted to fly (that's a bit sticky, isn't it?" It was, so Barry penciled new Panels 1 to 4, wherein Zukala sends the demon back to its netherworld.

(2) On the final page, Zukala, too, fades away — but in the original version, Barry drew (and it's quite possible that my plot had asked him to draw) Zukala's daughter Zephra dead by laggis-Noga's indiscriminate hand, for whatever long-forgotten reason, we decided Zephra should live, so Panels 4 & 5 were redrawn, and her lifeless head was excised from Panel 6.

In this issue we've reprinted from photocopies the original penciled versions of those two pages.

The only other snag was that, for some reason, that issue wound up being inked by the late Frank Giacoia, instead of regular inker Sal Buscema. Frank, under both his own name and as "Frank Ray," had long since proven himself one of Jack Kirby's and Marvel's very best inkers, but somehow his style didn't mesh as well with Barry's work as those of Sal and Dan Adkins had. (Several of those who wrote letters re CTB #5 clearly felt the same; in any event, Sal was back the next issue for a long run. Incidentally, CTB #5 itself featured a letter from Michael Reaves of San Bernardino, California, who'd go on to become a prose and TV writer - and the story editor of the "Conan and the Young Barbarians" cartoon show.)

The name "Jaggta-Noga," by the way, I took from "The Curse of the Golden Skull," a Kullconnected vignette of REH's which would later be used as the basis of an issue of CTB.

Now, about this name "Zukala":

In addition to being the originator of the genre now known as sword-and-sorcery. Robert E. Howard was a poet of some skill, though his poetry ran to traditional rhymed and metered forms such as sonnets and ballads.

In 1970 Glenn Lord, literary agent for the REH estate and unofficial advisor to CONAN THE BARBARIAN, published a second thin volume of Howard's poetry, titled Singers in the Shadows.

Howard's poetry, titled Singers in the Shadows.

And the first poem in it was "Zukala's Hour,"
in which a powerful being of that name sat alone



Por Roy Thomas.

"High in his dim, ghost-haunted tower." The hour in question was one "when the wind is out of the north/And the grey light lifts for morn." Babies born at that time are "cursed," by the poet's reckoning, with "the gift of Zukala's power — /The gift of second sight."

With Glenn's permission, I utilized the first four short stanzas of that poem in CTB #5. Thus, enter Zukala, whom I made a sorcerer — and Zephra, the daughter cursed with a second sight which foresees her own death. (But she also can turn into a tigress, so there are some compensations.)

So overwhelming was reader reaction to both characters that, when we published a crossover with Efric of Melnibon the next year (CTB #14-15), they were shoehorned into it; and there, indeed, Zephra finally met her end. Zukala himself would die, in a manner of speaking, in CTB #115 in 1980, the tenth-anniversary issue and my last for quite a few years. But when I officially returned to scripting CTB with #241, despite a Zukala tale by another writer in SAVAGE SWORD only a few earlier, I used Zukala as my "welcome-back" villain — and finally straightened out precisely who or what he was!

For, you see, REH had written two other poems about Zukala, which I hadn't known about in 1970 — and they made it quite clear that REH had intended his creation to be far more than a run-of-the-mill wizard.

In "Zukala's Jest," the gods bring a bodiless "Souls" before Zukala. He decrees it shall become a child who will grow up to become a beautiful woman, for whom men will sell their own souls. The Soul decries to Zukala that it isn't just to do this, for she, not he, will be blamed for whatever she may cause. Zukala laughs and says that "the gods must have their jest/Else Creation held no zest." And then, "Long and loud from his throne laughed Zukala."

Zukala himself relates "Zukala's Love Song," in which his chariot runs across the sky, "And the star-things ran before." He's even described as having wings, which he hides in a scarlet cloak out of loneliness, until he sees at last the girl he wants as his lover. She spurns him, however, and he terrorizes her in his gargantuan form, eventually taking her to his "sapphirean throne," where she clutches his arm and staff in fear, high above both stars and "topaz seas."

Nice guy, huh?

But clearly, one intended to be, if slightly less than a major god, at least more than just another human sorcerer.

A situation I made a start at correcting in CTB #241-243, and hope to deal with further in a near-future issue of our black-and-white companion title, THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN.

All that Howardian poetry, I'll admit, as well as some reading I'd been doing at the time of the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, caused me to wax a bit more poetic than usual in parts of "Zukala's Daughter." In particular, I labored over the dialogue of the two women on Page 7, Panel 1 (with its denouement in Panel 2), and it remains to this day one of my all-time favorite panels among those I've written.

I truly felt that with each issue both Barry and I were getting nearer the mark. Which was important, because we wouldn't be adapting actual. Howard stories every issue, and we wanted the art and writing to be as close to the standard set by "Grim Grey God" and "Tower of the Elephant" as possible.

The next issue was a step in the right direction.

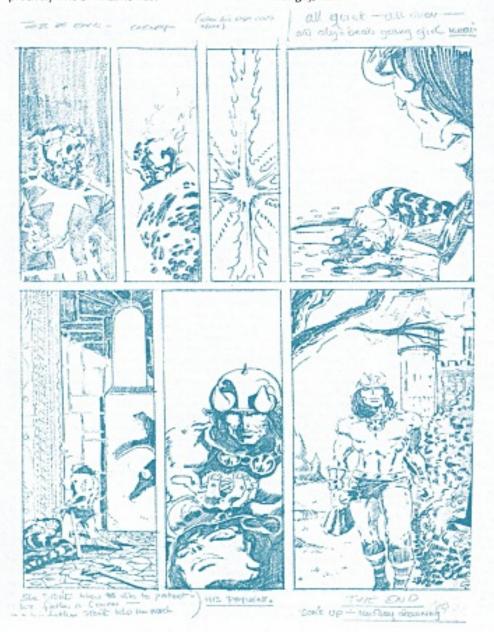
NEXT: DEVIL-WINGS OVER SHADIZAR!



OTHER CONAN MAGAZINES NOW ON SALE: CONAN THE ADVENTURER #5: Marvel's newest hit just keeps on rolling, with scintillating story by Roy Thomas and awesome art by Rafael Kayanan. Young Conan encounters a most unusual kind of witch — and more Picts than you can shake a pointed stick at! Plus, a special feature on Conan's Hyborian Age! See why the early issues of CTA have been a virtual sellout all over the country!

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #226: "The Four Ages of Conan!" A quartet of stories of the swashbuckling Cimmerian: Young Conan's Day of Manhood in the wilds of Cimmeria — Conan and Red Sonja tossed into ancient Atlantis, where the barbarian must stand in for King Kull — Conan the Barachan pirate leads a raid on a treasure-leaden Stygjan ship — and King Conan faces the evil wizard Thoth-Amon, in a pulsating postscript to "The Phoenix on the Sword," the first Conan tale ever published! By Roy Thomas and a foursome of titanically talented artists!

CONAN SAGA #91: Searching for his pirate queen Blit, Conan faces "The Sorceress of the Swamp" — and "The Dance of the Skull" — in the jungles south of the Stygian desert! A full-length story by Roy Thomas, Howard Chaykin, and Ernie Chan, based on a tale by Robert E. Howard himself! Plus other special features!



AN ONGOING HISTORY OF CONAN THE BARBARIAN BY ROY THOMAS

DEVIL WINGS AND ANGEL EYES

I. SHADIZAR THE NOT-SO-NICE

"Devil-Wings over Shadizar," in CONAN THE BARBARIAN #6, is one of my personal favorites among the first 115 issues, for several

For one thing, it was the first time we got to set a story in the tantalizingly-named Shadizar the Wicked, mentioned by Robert E. Howard in two Conan tales but never actually verbally described by him. And since at the time Marvel had no rights to Conan prose adventures written by others, that meant Barry and I could fashion Shadizar to our own lights.

Barry turned himself loose and created perhaps even better visuals than for the unnamed City of Thieves in CTB #4. From the "Thief of Baghdad" feel on Page 1, through the body-strewn street on Page 3 (complete with foot-trails leading into particular doorways, a type of detail rare in comics in those days), through both the exterior and interior of the tower of the Night Cult, he truly made Shadizar come alive.

II. THIEVES

We had fun with the characters, too. First there were "Blackrat and Fafnir," originally intended simply as a passing doff of the hat to Fritz Leiber's sword-and-sorcery team, Faihrd and the Gray Mouser. But Fainir turned out to have a life beyond what we originally envisioned (in CTB #17-18), and I've always wondered what happened to Blackrat after he awoke from Conan's powerful kick.

(Some of the two thieves' banter was inspired by the film "My Little Chickadee," wherein a bartender reminds W.C. Fields that, in their long-ago battle with a certain female, it was he — the bartender - who had actually knocked her down, "Yeah," drawls Fields, "but I'm the one who kicked her!")

III. . . . AND TROLLOPS

Then there was Jenna. Ah, sweet Jenna!

Barry may or may not have had a particular young lady in mind when he drew our curly-haired B-girl. My own inspiration was Brigid O'Shaughnessy, the ever-untruthful, many-pseudonymed "heroine" of The Maltese Falcon. Or didn't you notice that Jenna took Conan to a blacksmith named "Maldiz," who declared that the "heart" he made of the Cimmerian's gold was "not quite up to a falcon I once forged"?

I always considered "Devil-Wings" our version of one of Rudyard Kipling's famous "Just-So Stories," with their titles like "How the Leopard Got His Spots," etc. My Kiplingesque subtitle for CTB #6 would have been a reference to that staple myth of prose, stage, and screen: "How the Prostitute Got a Heart of Gold."

How else? She stole it.

Of course, we had to be cagey about exactly what it was that Jenna did in that tayern besides hustle drinks. I had a wench welcome Conan to "the house of Suwong," a not overly subtle reference to a popular book and movie, The World of Suzie Wong.

IV. KINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE

One line of Jenna's caused us a minor problem later.

On Page 4, she mentions being in Aquilonia once, and seeing "King Numedides himself, in his royal chariot." In "The Drums of Tombalku," an unfinished REH tale completed by L. Sprague de Camp, that nation's sovereign years later was named "Vilerus," evidently by Howard; but since in 1971 Marvel had no right to adapt the hybrid "Drums," we ignored the reference. It was 1977 before we adapted the pure REH version as "The Horror from the Red Tower" (SAVAGE SWORD #21/CONAN SAGA #21) - and even then we listed Numedides as Aquilonia's king, to be consistent with CTB #6. Other non-REH Conan prosers, however, would later put Numedides's ascension to the throne somewhat later, and postulate other kings during Conan's younger days.

No problem. Over the years we've brought the Marvel Conan mythos in line with other versions whenever possible - not because we think any non-REH Conan work is one whit more valid than our own comics, but because we feel that the fewer inconsistencies between the various renderings of Conan, the better for all concerned.

So we simply figure it was actually a youngish Prince Numedides Jenna saw, and either mistook for a king or, with her own mendacious inclinations, inflated to a full-blown monarch in order to make seeing him more of a "big deal." Either way, the line fits her character, so we elected not to change it in this reprinting.

V. OF YAKS AND BATS

Barry tossed in artistic touches of his own, naturally. We both felt Conan no longer needed the crutch of a recurring outfit suggesting a costume, so Barry decided CTB #6 was the right time to get rid of that horned helmet. He even suggested Jenna's line as she removes it: "It makes you look like a yak." I know a good line when I read one in the margin notes, so I used it, even though a young woman who'd spent most of her time in Zamora might not have seen or heard of yaks.

The Night Cult's tower was an art deco delight, and Barry's version of a giant bat truly impressive. (Actually, inker Sal Buscema had to contribute his own bit to die fledermaus, as Barry had accidentally drawn its finger/wing arrangement off in one particular; it would take too long to explain how, but it was easily fixable.)

VI. HYBORIAN HUZZAHS

CTB's readers loved "Devil-Wings," but the early accolade that meant the most to me was learning that several fellow comics writers thought it captured the Conan feel so well that they believed it was an adaptation of an REH story, rather than an original story. (Now that I think about it, I guess those guys could write better than they could read. Every "adapted" story was clearly labeled.)

And, when 1972 rolled around, the members of the Academy of Comic Book Arts, an organization made up at the time of most comics professionals, nominated "Devil-Wings" as one of the four "best individual stories" of '71. One of the other three nominees was CTB #4's "Tower of the Elephant," no less. Not too shabby.

(By the way, this is probably as good a place as possible to point out an error in CONAN CLASSIC #2's reprinting of CTB #2: "Lair of the Beast-Men" was nominated by ACBA as best story of 1970, not 1971 — though of course the award was given out in '71; that error had sneaked into a 1972 reprint annual, and we forgot to change it when, at the last minute, we had to reprint the story not from CTB #2 itself but from that earlier reprint!)

Anyway, CONAN THE BARBARIAN, with its ten issues published for calendar year 1971, was up for "best continuing feature" against Green Lantern/Green Arrow and THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. Barry, who'd been nominated in the "new talent" category in '70, this time graduated to the "best penciler" category, up against a trio of lightweights named Neal Adams, John Buscema, and John Romita; while I was nominated as "best writer" alongside Archie Goodwin and Denny O'Neil.

This time, as opposed to '70, we actually brought home a couple of Shazam awards: CTB was voted "best continuing feature, while I was given the nod for my work on CONAN and THE

Sometimes, things just come together like clockwork. "Devil-Wings over Shadizar" was one of those times.

VII. MEANWHILE, UP IN THE NORTH FORTY

At about the same time as "Devil-Wings," still another Conan classic had just been published "The Frost Giant's Daughter," which Barry and I did for the first (and nearly only) issue of Marvel's first black-and-white comic, SAVAGE TALES, ST #1 had come out around the time of CTB #5, but since b&w mags didn't need to be finished quite as far in advance as color comics, I'm reasonably certain its Conan feature was done around the time of CTB #6, if not a bit later. But we'll cover "The Frost Giant's Daughter" when we reprint it, a few months hence.

VIII. SKETCH AND SLASH

There's one drawing of Barry's I've been wanting to reprint ever since it first appeared, in 1973's SAVAGE TALES #2, as a "spot illo." It was reproduced from a pencil sketch of Barry's, so it's a bit less finished and polished than usual, but it's an illustration of considerable power. You have to turn the comic sideways to see it — but that's a small price to pay for this true collector's item, never seen since its first publication more than two decades ago.

IX. HYBORIAN GREMLINS

Ulp! Is our collective face red! We learned, just as we went to aress, that due to a screw-up by somebody besides your beeaguered Bullpen for a change, the second issue of CONAN CLASSIC was accidentally printed not with Barry Windsor-Smith's cover, but sporting the one which Rafael Kayanan had done for CONANTHE ADVENTURER #2!

Naturally, we recalled all the copies of CC #2 we could faster than you can say "General Motors," and reissued copies with the right cover intact. Of course, it remains to be seen whether, when comics shops display CONAN THE ADVENTURER #2 with the correct cover, readers think it's the same mag they may bought a couple of weeks earlier!

Knowing the way the wonderful world of stamp collectors goes, though, wouldn't it be weird if the copies of CC #2 with the wrong cover became collector's items, giving new meaning to the name CONAN CLASSIC?

Anyway — here's an additional letter re CONAN CLASSIC #1:

Dear Friends,

I'm writing to ask you to publish, in future issues of CONAN CLASSICS, the original covers. As you may know, Conan has been one of the most popular comic book characters in Italy since the

1970s, and is being published right now with success. I could easily buy the Italian reprints, but I would prefer to read them in English. Could you do something about it?

Alfredo Ferrante Via Modena 50 00184 Rome, Italy

Alas, Alfredo, only if you're willing to subscribe, which the postage situation makes a more expensive proposition than we'd like it to be. Look for our sub ads, and if you see CONAN CLASSIC listed with our other mags, and with foreign rates, that means subscriptions are available.

Only thing is — we are printing the original cover illustrations on CONAN CLASSIC, except for recoloring!

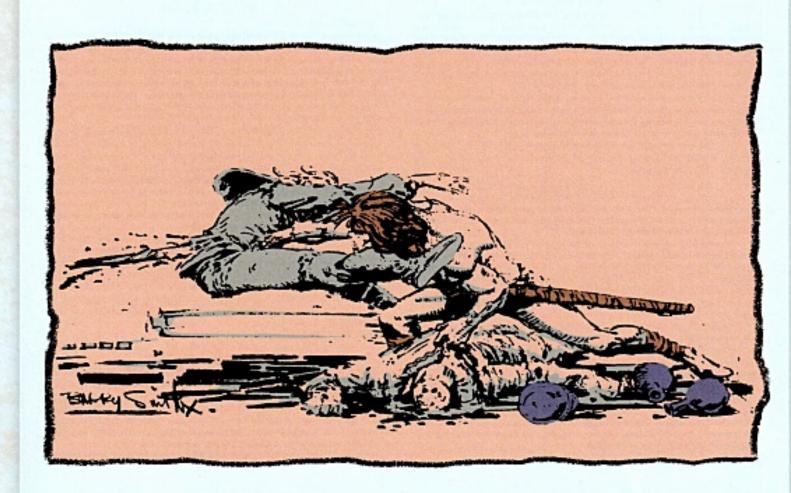
By the way, we left your letter intact with its reference to the name "CONAN CLASSICS" in the plural because not only did you write it that way, but so did we ourselves, the first several times we referred to the mag — and so did other Marvel editors, in various places in its own mixed-up mags. That's what the title of the mag was thought to be, before they learned differently, by quite a few people, including —

- Richard, Michael, and Roy

OTHER CONAN MAGS NOW ON SALE:

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #227: Special issue — "The Four Ages of Conan!" A quartet of cataclysmic tales. See Conan on his Day of Manhood — as a sword-wielding soldier of fortune — as a Barachan pirate — and as fearsome King of Aquilonia! By Roy Thomas and four of the Bullpen's artistic greats!

CONAN SAGA #92: Conan and Belit together again — just in time for the origin of Zula! Three timeless tales set in Stygia, from the hawk city of Harakht to the tombs of Luxur, haunted by the Devourer of the Dead — with Thoth-Amon, Serpent Men, and Man-Serpents thrown in for good measure by Roy Thomas, John Buscema, and Ernie Chan! Plus our Conan Comics Chronology and other special features.



AN ONGOING HISTORY OF MARVEL'S CONAN THE BARBARIAN COMICS BY ROY THOMAS

THE GOD IN THE BOWLER

Weird subtitle, eh? Hopefully, by the end, you'll understand why it was used for this piece, which deals with how Robert E. Howard's story "The God in the Bowl" was adapted into "The Lurker Within" in CONAN THE BARBARIAN #7 in 1970:

in 1951 science fiction/fantasy author L. Sprague de Camp, a newly converted fan of REH's work, tracked down three unpublished Conan prose tales by Howard (who had died in 1936). One of these was "The Cod in the Bowl."

It was a fairly slight thing, an Hyborian-Age "locked-room mystery": A guard is found dead in a Nemedian museum, beside a large empty bowl. Conan, caught burgling the place, naturally becomes the primary suspect. In the end he slays the treacherous Azirias, the man who hired him to rob museum. With a single stroke he also beheads a man-headed serpent with a face like "the marble mask of a god"—then flees, having learned it was sent north in the bowl by a Stygian wizard named Thoth-Amon in hopes of killing one Caranthes, priest of lbis.

Oddly, "Bowl" contains a larger proportion of dialogue than any other Conan story, and probably less action. If one were going to do the Conan tales in old-time radio format, "Bowl" would be the easiest to adapt.

De Camp edited the story slightly (most pointedly changing the giveaway phrase, "The god has a long neck" to "The god has a long reach"), and it was published in 1952 in a magazine called, of all things, Space Science Fiction! In 1953 it was included in the Gnome Press hardbound book The Coming of Conan; in 1967 it was reprinted in the paperback called simply Conan.

II. ENTER ROY AND BARRY

In summer of 1970, with CONAN THE BARBARIAN off to a flying start, I took my first trip to England, where Barry was living while Marvel was trying to get him a "green card" so he could re-enter the U.S. Barry served as a gracious guide during my week in London. I was uneasy driving a rented car on the "wrong" side of the road; the first thing I had to do upon arrival was to drive out of Heathrow Airport into the city with three other people in the car, but somehow things worked out.

My trip coincided with the need to begin CTB #7, which was to be "The God in the Bowl." Barry and I agreed our version needed more action, so, while walking about Londontown, we restructured things somewhat, while trying to retain the spirit of the prose story.

The comic could also use a female presence (there's none in the original), so it was decided Aztrias should become a woman. There really weren't a lot of other candidates.

III. THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

That night, Barry came to my hotel for a final session on the issue. Since my room was small (and my first wife Jean was tired), we moved our plotting session downstairs to the lounge.

Several other guests were trying to read or converse, so Barry and I started out sedately, adding Aztrias's encounter with some wolves and Conan (in that order) in the first few pages. However, our fervor overpowered us, and soon we were babbling excitedly about expanding Conan's single sword thrust at the end of "Bowl" into a battle 'twixt Cimmerian and man-serpent (as I'd name it later, to contrast with Kull's foes, the serpent men) which would go on for page after thrilling page.

Heads turned. Eyebrows were raised. Disapproving looks were cast like Stygian spells.

Despite our best intentions, we were waxing enthusiastic in a most public and unacceptable way. I distinctly recall that at one point Barry, brandishing either a handy object or a fistful of air which he treated as a sword, "became" Conan and slashed away at the man-serpent.

At this point we realized we had indeed gone too far, and curtailed our activities. But CONAN THE BARBARIAN #7 was definitely mapped out. We'd decided to give the readers their first glance at Thoth-Amon, too; Barry later decided to draw his head topped by horns which might or might not be growing out of his skull.

IV. ANATOMY OF A CLASSIC

Weeks later, back in the States, when we received Barry's pencils, Marvel's founding father Stan Lee— no fan of sword-and-sorcery— was so impressed that he had the art photostatted (after lettering) as an example of how to tell a story Marvel-style, showing that a relative newcomer could hold his own with the likes of Jack Kirby, John Buscema, and John Romita.

Those pencils, complete with Barry's margin notes growing out of our plotting session and his own later thoughts, finally saw the light of day in CONAN SAGA #3, and are worth a perusal by any serious fan of comic art as an example not only of superb penciling, but of how writer and artist work together almost organically to produce a Marvel mag—though admittedly the contributions of a writer to an artist's work are usually harder to pin down than vice versa.

Barry, for his part, had added several details we hadn't discussed, since REH's tale was pretty much squeezed into the middle of the comics version (from the bottom of the 8th page through somewhere on the 12th). In other cases, the expansions had already been worked out between the two of us. At this late date perhaps Barry can still remember which was which, but I often can't.

For example: In the museum Conan is startled by a stuffed elephant, which he momentarily mistakes for the alien entity Yag-Kosha, from the "Tower of the Elephant" in issue #4. A quarter of a century later, I've no clear idea whether that was a touch we'd discussed, or whether Barry tossed it in on his own. I'm inclined to think the latter, but....

Interesting, too, that in those kinder, gentler days, Barry appended a note to the panel on the 15th page wherein Conan plunges his sword into the monster's coils: "Hope the Code don't chop this!" Nowadays, the Comics Code has other things to worry about.

V. THE MAIN EVENT

And what a fight that was!

One reason I've long considered it one of the best short (in page count) fights in a Marvel comic, besides the fantastic drawing, is that Barry and I both believed strongly that there have to be certain moments in combat when things rise to a climax, and a terrific amount of force is released. This, we felt, was far more effective than mere endless pummeling, with each punch looking as blockbusterish as the previous. I'd been influenced in part in this by my friend Gil Kane, one of the premier comics theorists (as well as artists) around.

The above-mentioned plunging of Conan's blade into the man-serpent is one of those moments. But the highlight, clearly, is when he's been pounding away at the mortally wounded monster— then reaches over, grabs the warchman's fallen crossbow, and — after a brilliantly placed "pause" panel at the bottom of the 16th page, during which he gazes down at his fallen foe— slams the bow with shattering force into its head. To punctuate this, as can be seen in CONAN SAGA #3, Barry drew a profile of Ben Grimm in the margin, perhaps identifying with all those marble chunks which come flying off the man-serpent.

Then, the battle over, Conan collapses, to revive moments later and push the snake's tall off him. (I do remember thinking, while scripting this page, that it would've been even better if the carcass had been lying atop Conan instead of the other way around, so that he'd have to push those heavy coils off him—but hey, even the ancient Persians made their rugs with a slight imperfection, lest the gods accuse them of excessive pride!)

Did I mention I think the art job on CONAN THE BARBARIAN #7 was brilliant?

Yeah, I thought I did.

VI. FINISHING TOUCHES

Barry's storytelling was so superlative that I could use captions to enhance the mood, rather than to relate events. During the fight, for instance, I could sneak in information on how the sleeping man-serpent had been discovered among the tombs of Stygia, etc. And on the seventh page, I felt it best to let the pictures tell the story entirely. Again, whether Barry had a silent page in mind there, let alone suggested it (there's no hint of it in his margin notes), I couldn't begin to guess now.

I changed the word "STYGIA," which had been lettered in straightfor-

CONAN CLASSIC 7 (DEZEMBRO DE 1994). "CONAN THE MARVELOUS" (CONTINUAÇÃO)

Por Roy Thomas.

ward English on a museum sign on the eighth page, into a stylized design which suggested that word, but was clearly in a foreign tongue (Nemedian) with its own system of letters.

I altered two names (Kallian Publico— Kallian Podarco in the Gnome book— became simply Kallian; and for some reason Caranthes became Karanthes— I have this sneaking suspicion that Glenn Lord may have told me that REH had originally spelled it that way, since otherwise I'd have probably left it as it was).

Well, actually, I changed three names. Since we'd expanded "The God in the Bowl" so much, I felt our version needed a different name, though if

I had it to do over again, I'd retain the original.

I also changed the expression "The god has a long reach" back to REH's original "long neck," though de Camp's phrase is actually the better of the two. (Maybe I was just trying to make up for all our other alterations.)

Sal Buscema once again faithfully inked Barry's pencils, and the result was one of the best-looking issues yet of CONAN THE BARBARIAN.

VII. THE SWORD AND THE SALES REPORT

Skipping ahead a bit:

tronically, though we wouldn't know it for months, CTB #7 would climax a downward trend of the comic's sales.

#1 had sold quite well, despite only a passing mention in the Bullpen Bulletins, in a day when first issues were hardly the collectibles they are today; but each issue since then had sold fewer copies than the previous one. And #7, for all its undeniable qualities, was the poorest seller yet, though still not losing money.

On the basis of that sales report, CONAN THE BARBARIAN, which had gone monthly with #4, was actually slated for cancellation for one entire day— at the behest of Stan, who understandably felt the mag was going nowhere, and that if it were eliminated Marvel could prevail upon Barry to pencil more profitable super hero mags. I happened to be home writing that day, since Stan and I only came into the Marvel offices two or three times a week, not always on the same day.

Next morning, I made a polite but impassioned argument that, since it was publisher Martin Goodman who decided which titles to cancel, Stan ought to leave it to him this time, too, and not push the matter. If Stan wanted Barry off CONAN, fine by me— well, it wasn't really fine by me at all, but I couldn't say that, could I?— but the book shouldn't be killed primarily to free an artist!

VIII. A HAPPY ENDING

I guess I was persuasive that morning in my desperation, because Stan dropped plans to push for cancellation of CONAN THE BARBARIAN, though it returned to bimonthly status starting with #14, the issue in the works at the time of the sales report on #7. Stan probably still had hopes that Barry would sneak in some other work, though I knew full well that, at that time, Barry had zero interest in drawing super heroes.

On the other hand, since Stan Lee was/is one of the most foresighted and intelligent editors in the history of comic books, and Martin Goodman was a canny publisher, the chances are that, no matter what I'd said, CTB would have been reinstated to the lineup before too long, because—

—a few weeks later, the sales reports on CTB #8 came in, and they were up somewhat. Stan and I suspected that the more humanoid foe (the ebon-skinned winged man from "The Garden of Fear") had something to do with it; so many previous covers had spotlighted giant spiders, giant bats, and giant snakes, even if with a human head.

#9's sales (with the cover of giant humanoid skeletons in armor) proved higher still; and CTB was on its slow, steady climb to become what it was for much of the next decade—one of Marvel's best-selling titles.

As for why this piece is entitled "The God in the Bowler":

Well, Barry and I worked out the details of CTB #7 in a hotel lobby in London, and over in England men used to wear bowler hats, and— Never mind.

IX. ART FOR ART'S SAKE

As in each issue of CONAN CLASSIC thus far, we've also reprinted artwork of Barry's which hasn't seen the light of day in a while. .

This time around, we're spotlighting a drawing which was done during the early period of Barry's work on CONAN THE BARBARIAN. It had no connection to any particular story, and we finally used it in conjunction with an article on REH's stories about gnomish races in SAVAGE SWORD #13 in 1976.

Also in 1971 (the year of CTB #7), King Kull, the hero Howard had cre-

ated several years before Conan, gained his own title, KULL THE CON-QUEROR, after a trial-balloon story elsewhere. We've reproduced one of Marie Severin's sketches for the cover of KULL #2, which shows the Atlantean facing the flip side of the coin from the man-headed snake which served Thoth-Amon— the serpent men who worked in concert (in the comics, at least) with Thulsa Doom.

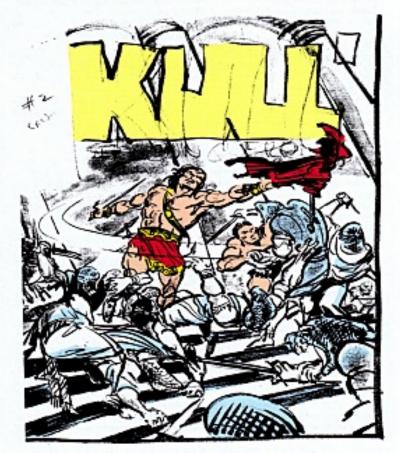
Of course, it remained for CONAN THE BARBARIAN #89 (on view in CONAN SAGA #93, now on sale, by a Kothian coincidence!) to be the first time those two anthropo-reptilian groups were used in the same story— and it wasn't till SAVAGE SWORD #190-193's "The Skull upon the Seas" serial that Thoth-Amon and Thulsa Doom did battle over the two races' loyalties.

Still, we think the two covers— Barry's and Marie's— make an interesting contrast. We just took a long time to pull together the threads of the tapestry, that's all.

But then, you can't hurry tapestries.

Next: THE KEEPERS OF THE CRYPT!

SPECIAL NOTE: With this issue, CONAN CLASSIC changes its status to "direct-only." From now on it will be sold only through the direct market— Le., primarily in comics stores rather than on newsstands, in supermarkets, and the like. If you dig seeing these early Thomas/Windsor-Smith masterpieces half as much as we do, please track them down—and tell anyone else who's interested that he can pick up CONAN CLASSIC at his local comics shop! Each issue will continue to feature not only a complete story, but rarely-seen Conan art by Barry Windson-Smith and other Bullpen greats, 'plus the continuing story behind the stories and art in the early issues of CTB. We've got some real surprises coming up, which no Conan fan will want to miss— even if he's got a complete collection of CONAN THE BARBARIAN!



AN ON-GOING HISTORY OF CONAN THE BARBARIAN BY ROY THOMAS

I. A TALE FROM THE CRYPT

So far, in the first seven issues of CONAN THE BARBARIAN for 1970-71, Barry and I had adapted two actual Conan prose stories (#4 & #7), had done four original adventures (#1, #2, #5, and #6), and had turned one non-Conan tale by Robert E. Howard into an exploit of the Cimmerian (#3).

Now it was time for something just a wee bit different:

In 1966, among the voluminous papers left by REH when he died in 1936, Glenn Lord, literary agent for his estate, had discovered several uncompleted Conan tales — as well as a one-page outline for a story to be titled "The Hall of the Dead."

The outline was duly turned over to L. Sprague de Camp, who was packaging the new Conan paperback series for Lancer Books as well as continuing his "posthumous collaborations" with Howard. From REH's synopsis, de Camp wrote a short story which was first published in The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction for February 1967, then almost immediately reprinted in the paperback volume Conan.

II. THE TOMB EXHUMED

In 1970 Marvel did not yet have permission to adapt any of the "posthumous collaborations" or pastiches (wholly new Conan stories by other writers). We were already discussing that possibility with de Camp and others, but in the meantime CONAN THE BARBARIAN had reached the point where "Hall of the Dead" would fit chronologically. We hated to skip an exploit actually plotted by REM, though.

As so often in the past, Glenn Lord came to our rescue, by giving us permission to turn Howard's original outline into what was, except for the broad outlines, a brand new story — which Barry and

The reader can have fun, if he/she wishes, comparing the de Camp-written "Hall of the Dead" with our "The Keepers of the Crypt," especially after reading the outline by Howard himself, which we've printed in this same issue of CONAN CLASSIC.

III. CUSTOMIZING THE SEPULCHER

Fitting our version in between our adaptation of "The God in the Bowl" and certain events I had in mind for the near future necessitated a few changes.

We changed the title, to avoid confusion with the de Camp rendition. The Keepers of the Crypt," of course, is a tip of the halberd to the Crypt-Keeper of E.C. horror comics infamy, who at that time was a decade and a half out of print and seemed likely to forever remain so.

Since CTB #7 had occurred in Nemedia, we changed the location from Zamora to Corinthia. The Gunderman captain was altered from Nestor to Burgun — and it was intended from the start that in CT8 #10 he would be the never-named "Gunderman deserter" who was hanged in the REH story "Rogues in the House." Whether Howard had meant the two Gundermen to be one and the same, no one has any way of knowing - or denying.

We also shoehorned in a brief flashback of the all-important Battle of Vernarium, and we made Burgun one of the Gundermen who'd manned that fort when it was attacked by the Cimmerian hordes. Of course, the full story of that slaughter wasn't told until CONAN THE ADVENTURER #1. (And you'll never know what a temptation

it was to sneak Burgun into CTA #1!)
Since de Camp had written the "monstrous being which haunted the city" as a huge slug, Barry and I decided to make ours some sort of dragon. It was probably Barry who decided to make it a kind of gigantic Gila-Monster; he was the one who'd have to draw all those scales, after all. As inked by Tom Sutton, filling in for Sal Buscema, it was a quite striking menace. The panel on Page 8, with a fatigued Conan leaning against the dead, overturned monster, is one of my favorite scenes from the early days of CTB.

The giant "ancient warriors" were not described in detail by Howard, so we made them mummified skeletons in armor. They, and the jade serpent Conan absconded with, both popped up again in CTB #255-256 only a few years ago; they were both simply too good not to make a return appearance.

IV. GRAVEYARD HUMOR

Other things Barry and I added were fun, too:

Making up a sort of three-dice game that Conan and Burgun

could play for the gems; Turning Conan's "light-of-love" (as mentioned in passing by REH in his outline) into the greedy, mendacious Jenna from CTB #6, and setting up events to carry her over into "Rogues in the House" in #11;

That little demon-statue at the entrance to the ancient, ruined city. But my favorite touch was one which many readers missed,

On Page 13 (numbered as P. 14 in the original because of the two half-pages), Panel 2, as Conan and Burgun are surrounded by the armored skeletons, look in the upper left-hand corner, where coins are scattered all over the palace floor. If the reproduction in this reprint is as good as in CTB #8, you'll be able to read what Barry scribbled amid the splattered wealth:

"I must be mad to sit here drawing all these coins."

Perhaps he was — we're all a bit mad in this comic-book biz but if so, it was a divine madness, and one which produced yet another CONAN CLASSIC.

As to whether the de Camp version or the Thomas/Windsor-Smith version of REH's concept is better - well, we're content to let the readers peruse both and decide — and there are really no winners or losers in such a contest.

Barry and I did our best, then moved on (with Conan and Jenna)

to the next issue.

V. ART FROM THE VAULT

Once again, we're reprinting an early piece of Conan art by Barry Windsor-Smith. This illustration, done around the time of our adaptation of "Red Nails," shows the Cimmerian striding through a field of tall grass — each blade carefully delineated — toward an overturned boat, and was quite evocative. It deserves another look-see.

So does next issue's tale from CONAN THE BARBARIAN #9:

NEXT: THE GARDEN OF FEAR

OTHER CONAN MAGS ON SALE NOW:

CONAN THE ADVENTURER #8: Revealed at last-- Conan's first exploit as a thief of Zamoral The problem is- he's not the only one after a pair of twin gerrs. So are some cutthroat professional thieves- not to mention the demon-god they were originally stolen from! Roy Thomas and John Watkiss adapt a classic horror tale by fantasy master Clark Ashton Smithwith cover by regular CTA artist Rafael Kayanan who returns to CTA with

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #229: Get in on the beginning of three harrowing Hyborian tales! Conan and Red Sonja time-tossed into the ancient, evil kingdom of Acheron in our "Conan the Barbarian" segment by Roy Thomas, Mike Docherty, and E.R. Cruz- the return of our "Kull of Atlantis" series with art by E.R .- and "The Ring of Boilbu," the first chapter of a four-part Red Sonja solo thriller, with art by Esteban Maroto.

CONAN SAGA #94: "The Crown and the Corsairs"- the Conclusion! Three exciting exploits from the vintage years of CONAN THE BARBAR-IAN, as Belit regains her long-lot throne— or does she? And that's just if she survives the episode of "The Diadem of the Ciant-Kings"! By Roy Thomas, John Buscema, and Emie Chan. Plus more surprise features!

CONAN CLASSIC 8 (JANEIRO DE 1995), SINOPSE DE "THE HALL OF THE DEAD"

A história publicada em Conan, The Barbarian 8, "Os Guardiões da Tumba", foi baseada na sinopse de uma história chamada "The Hall of the Dead" (O Salão dos Mortos), por Robert E. Howard, completada por L. Sprague de Camp.

THE HALL OF THE DEAD

A Synopsis by

Robert E. Howard

[EDITORIAL NOTE: This issue's "Conan the Marvelous" tells the story of the Marvel version of this outline. We thought you might enjoy comparing "The Keepers of the Crypt" with the de Camp prose version. We've added paragraphing to the original unparagraphed single-spaced typed sheet by REH, but otherwise have changed it in no way:)

A squad of Zamorian soldiers, led by the officer Nestor, a Gunderman mercenary, were marching down a narrow gorge, in pursuit of a thief, Conan the Cimmerian, whose thefts from rich merchants and nobles had infuriated the government of the nearest Zamorian city.

Conan had left the city and been followed into the mountains. The walls of the gorge were steep and the gorge floor grown thickly with high rich grass.

Striding through this grass at the head of his men, Nestor tripped over something and fell heavily. It was a rawhide rope stretched there by Conan, and it tripped a spring-pole which started a sudden avalanche that overwhelmed all the soldiers except Nestor, who escaped, bruised, and with his armor scratched and dented.

Enraged, he followed the trail alone, and emerging into an upland plateau, came into the deserted city of the ancients, where he met Conan.

He instantly attacked the Cimmerian, who, after a desperate battle, knocked him senseless with a swordstroke on his helmet, and went on into the deserted city, thinking him dead. Nestor recovered and followed the Cimmerian.

Conan, meanwhile, had entered the city, clambering over the walls, the gates being locked, and had encountered the monstrous being which haunted the city. This he slew by casting great blocks of stone upon it from an elevation, and then descending and hacking it to pieces with his sword.

He had made his way to the great palace which was hewn out of a single monstrous hill of stone in the center of the city. He was seeking an entrance, when Nestor came upon him again, sword in hand, having followed him over the wall.

Conan disgustedly advised him to aid him in securing the vast fabulous treasure instead of fighting. After some argument the Gunderman agreed, and they made their way into the palace, eventually coming to the great treasure chamber, where warriors of a bygone age lay about in life-like positions.

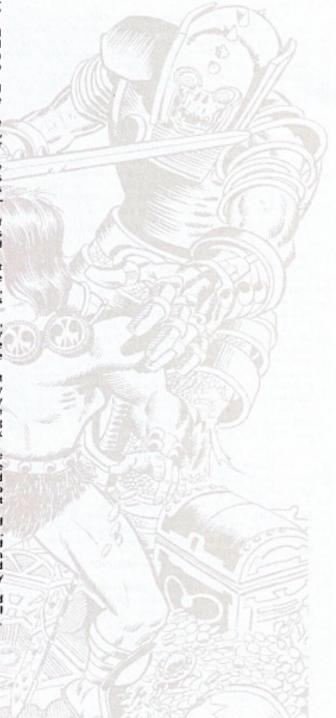
The companions made up packages of gold and precious stones, and threw dice to decide which should take a set of perfectly matched uncanny gems which adorned an altar, on which lay a jade serpent, apparently a god. Conan won the toss, and gave all the gold and the other jewels to Nestor.

He himself swept up the altar-gems and the jade serpent — but when he lifted it off the altar, the ancient warriors came terrifically to life, and a terrible battle ensued, in which the thieves barely managed to escape with their lives. Hewing their way out of the palace, they were followed by the giant warriors who, upon coming into the sunlight, crumpled into dust. A terrific earthquake shook down the deserted city, and the companions were separated.

Conan made his way back to the city, and entering a tavern, where his light-of-love was guzzling wine, spilled the jewels out onto the ale-splashed table, in the Maul. To his amazement, they had turned to green dust. He then prepared to examine the jade serpent, who was still in the leather sack. The girl lifted the sack and dropped it with a scream, swearing that something moved inside it.

At this instant a magistrate entered with a number of soldiers and arrested Conan, who set his back to a wall, and drew his sword. Before the soldiers could close in, the magistrate thrust his hand into the sack. Nestor had regained the city, with the coins which had not crumpled, and drunk, had told of the exploit. They had sought to arrest him, but drunk though he was, he had cut his way through and escaped.

Now, as the magistrate thrust his hand into the sack, he shricked and jerked it forth, a living serpent fast to his fingers. The turmoil which followed gave Conan and the girl an opportunity to escape.



Reprodução do artigo de Roy Thomas.

CONAN THE MARVELOUS

AN ONGOING HISTORY OF MARVEL'S CONAN THE BARBARIAN COMICS BY ROY THOMAS

A CIMMERIAN'S GARDEN OF CURSES

I. THOSE EVER-ROVING SONS OF ARYAS

When Conan and his sometime lover Jenna rode out of a Corinthian village just ahead of the gendarmes at the end of CONAN THE BARBARIAN #6's "The Keepers of the Crypt," I knew just where they were going:

Into the Garden of Fear.

During 1932 and 1933, the period when he wrote the very first Conan stories, Robert E. Howard likewise authored what some call his "James Allison" stories. Each of these six or seven tales is set in a different, pseudo-historical time period, with a different hero, but they are tied together by the fact that each of them is told as if a modern man, often named James Allison, is recalling past lives and reincarnations, when he was a hero with a name like Hunwolf or Niord or Hialmar, generally a barbarian warrior of those mysterious "Sons of Aryas" referred to in the famed Nemedian Chronicles quote ("Know, O Prince...") that had been the heading of an early Conan story.

These tales were, in short, racial memories, with, unfortunately, the usual early-twentieth-century tendency to assume "Aryan" (i.e., white) superiority, though mostly just in support of a rousing good story, not for any serious political purpose. The most famous, "The Valley of the Worm," was the only one published in Welrd Tales, the famous pulp magazine wherein Conan's exploits first appeared.

II. COME OUT INTO THE GARDEN, MAUD

The only other James Allison story printed during REH's lifetime was "The Garden of Fear," which appeared in, of all things, the issue of the pulp magazine Marvel Tales for July-August 1934! (If I remember my pulp history correctly, that mag wasn't put out by Martin Goodman, original publisher of the company that became Marvel Comics; Goodman's Marvel Tales came out in the late 30's, not long before the legendary MARVEL COMICS #1.)

In "Garden," a crippled James Allison recalls his life as Hunwolf, a pre-Ice Age barbarian of the Aesir, a Nordic people. Hunwolf killed a man who tried to abduct his lover, Gudrun, then fled with her to a distant mountain valley where a friendly hill tribe is menaced by a gigantic, ebon-skinned winged man. Hunwolf rescues Gudrun by stampeding a herd of mammoths through the carnivorous flowers around the winged man's doorless tower.

The story was reprinted in 1945 by early anthologist William L. Crawford, and has since popped up in several hardbound and paperback books.

III. PRUNING THE GARDEN

For the most part, Barry and I adapted "Garden" fairly close to REH's tale, though there was virtually no dialogue in the original story, so I had to add all conversations.

Barry threw in several nice touches, as usual, such as Conan's stroll among the mammoths, one wild creature in the midst of others— and the refraction of light between surface and underwater in Panel 3 on the 8th page (something rarely seen before in comics). He never took the easy way out.

Together, we also pulled off a little trick on the overly squeamish Comics Code of the day.

On the 11th page, we decided Barry would draw a three-panel sequence of the flowery plants beneath the winged man's tower—and that they would change over the sequence from pinkish-white to bright red, to indicate they had sucked the blood from the hillman dropped into their midst. We were afraid the Code would balk at this, so I didn't refer to it in copy; but the colorist was instructed to make the gradual change to blood-crimson. It was more subtle that way, anyhow.

Those were the Good Old Days. Of course, we don't do things like that anymore.

IV. GARLANDS AMONG THE GREENERY

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #9 was well received on just about every level.

For one thing, it continued the upward climb in sales begun with #8, thus making CTB safe from the danger of cancellation. (For the story of CTB's near-demise, see CONAN CLASSIC #7.)

A year later, a hardbound study of the comic book included Panel 4 on the second-from-last page as an example of both an excellent panel (Conan and the winged man falling through the crystal roof of the tower) and an admirable restraint by the complete lack of any sound effects therein. (Actually, of course, there were never any non-verbal sound effects in issues of CTB I wrote, nor were there any thought balloons. That was simply rare in Marvel or in comics in those days, that's all.)

"The Garden of Fear" may have lacked the breathtaking beauty of issues like #4 and #7, perhaps even of #8's "Keepers of the Crypt," but it continued the string of— dare I say it?— Conan classics.

V. STILL LIFE

Besides the self-explanatory note accompanying the unique half-drawing of Conan which should be in evidence somewhere around here, and our "Hyborian Page," we've also printed another long-lost look Conan, drawn by artist P. Craig Russell as a tribute to the Barry Windsor-Smith Conan.

It's never seen the light of day except in 1974, when it was turned sideways and printed as the inside front and back covers of SAVAGE TALES #4. Craig has been noted since for his illustrations of operatic scenes and of Michael Moorcock's sword-and-sorcery hero Elric of Melniboné, but here's his first-ever drawing of Conan the Cimmerian!

NEXT: BEWARE THE WRATH OF ANU!

OTHER CONAN MAGS NOW ON SALE:

CONAN THE ADVENTURER #9: The triumphant return of artist Rafael Kayanan! In issues #1-5, young Conan met fighting-men, monks, and witches who were destined to cross his path again. Now, the final two pieces in this eeric chess game make their appearance— a most unique warrior and wizard— to set the stage for the most thrilling Conan saga ever! Story by Roy Thomas. Plus— the hidden truth behind these secret six, drawn by new discovery Aldwyn Newman!

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #230: The ancient and evil empire of Acheron falls— and if our hero isn't careful, he goes down with it! Our "Conan the Barbarian" storyline continues, by Roy Thomas, Mike Docherty, and E.R. Cruz. Plus— young Kull of Atlantis meets a most unusual werewolf (art by Cruz)— and Red Sonja continues her search for the sorcerous "Ring of Ikribu," as illustrated by Esteban Maroto.

CONAN SAGA #95: This is the big one! "Death on the Black Coast"— our monumental adaptation of Robert E. Howard's only tale of Conan and Bélit, as the pirate queen returns from the far side of death to save her beloved Cimmerian! (Where did you think they got that idea for the first Conan movie?) By Roy Thomas, John Buscema, and Ernie Chan. Plus a look behind the most famous romantic team in the annals of sword-and-sorcery!

HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES!

Something a wee bit offbeat this time, even for CONAN CLASSIC, the reprint mag with a difference:

In 1973, as a special frontispiece for the third issue of SAV-AGE TALES (forerunner of SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN), we featured a Barry Windsor-Smith Illo of Conan's right side, sword in hand. We thought we'd re-present it here as an example of "how the other half lives."

What was Conan doing with his left hand and the left side of his face, not to mention both feet? Your guess is as good as ours.

THE HYBORIAN PAGE

RICHARD ASHFORD EDITOR MICHAEL KRAIGER ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that into by request

Dear Marvel.

Only a couple of weeks ago I was talking with Eric, who runs the Comicrypt, about how nice it would be if Marvel would reprint the Barry Smith-drawn CONANs when their Masterworks series finally worked its way through the late 1960s. Imagine my surprise on seeing CONAN CLASSIC #1 a short time later!

Now I have to say I've never been one of the biggest fans of Conan, but there was definitely something about the way Roy Thomas wrote him— taking his entire life and chronicling it like a massive jigsaw puzzle— adapting the original works so faithfully and filling in the gaps so eloquently— that attracted my attention beyond the healthy dose of heaving bosoms on barely-clad maidens.

I never actually picked up an issue of CONAN THE BARBARIAN until a short time after you started the Belit series of stories. After that I stayed on till you departed. Apart from the single Doug Moench/Paul Gulacy graphic novel (can those two, together, do no wrong!), none of the works after Roy left seemed worth the effort.

Sadly, apart from one or two stories reprinted in the old "Treasury" editions, the only Barry Smith CONANs I've seen were the ones in those paperback reprints where they chopped up the panels. Now, at long last, these original epic tales are being reprinted in their correct format! It's like one of those mid-80s issues of MARVEL TALES, when they decided for the first time ever to reprint every single Steve Ditkodrawn AMAZING SPIDER-MAN in sequence. These are not stories that have been reprinted to death—these are the equivalent of long-buried treasures, finally unearthed after long eons.

Between the better paper, the printing (the reproduction here seems so much better, to be honest, than several recent reprint books, and even some of the Masterworks I've seen), the history pieces you've written, and even the added pages of rarely-printed art, I think this is in many ways (to me, at least) BETTER than buying the originals. After all, I wanna READ these things!

I'm here for the long haul, Roy. Hey- it's only 24 years late!

Henry R. Kujawa 1202 Everett St. Camden, NJ 08104

For a dyed-in-the-wool fan of Roy Thomas, Henry, you sure got in late— after around sixty issues of CONAN THE BARBARIAN had been published! Still, we'll take Conan fans wherever we find them, so welcome abourd. We hope CONAN CLASSIC lasts long enough for you to fill in those first five dozen issues!

Dear Mr. Ashford and Mr. Thomas,

"The Grey God Passes"— with flying colors! Roy Thomas's very first adaptation of a Robert E. Howard story still towers over those which have followed like Borri presiding over his valedictory hecatomb. That Richard Ashford so greatly esteems this story affords an insight into his part in the rejuvenation of the Conan magazines both old and magically new; scratch an editor and with luck you find a discerning reader.

"Lair of the Beast-Men" in CONAN CLASSIC #2 deals with the degradation and dehumanization of men by non-men; "Tower of the Elephant" in #4 reverses doers and done-to, with Conan ashamed on behalf of all men at the mistreatment of Yag-Kosha. But the senseless slaughter of "The Twillight of the Grim Grey God" in CONAN CLASSIC #3 is inflicted by men upon men. Borri is a thirsty god, but it seems safe to say that he and his thirst were called into being by the already-prevalent spilling of that which slakes his thirst.

As the lord of future battlefields, Conan will often be likened to a war god himself, yet it adds to the sense of occasion that the genuine article is on hand for a quantum leap past the reprised reprisals of Volff and Olav in #1 and the stockpiled siege machinery of the Brutheimr in #2 (always difficult to credit, given the absence of cities to besiege for hundreds of miles around; fortunately, Mr. Thomas managed to disarm at least us critics if not the man-apes in "Of Bears and

Beast-Men").

The spears of Hyperborea against the swords of Brythunia has a tactically simplified straightforwardness which allows for a more effective comics presentation than has usually been the case since; that Dunlang's is the only armor in evidence must have been a boon to Barry Smith. Mr. Thomas could have scripted even closer to Howard's Erse-Norse prototypes had it been Cimmerians "Contarfing" the Vanir, but by pitting the just-introduced Brythunians against the equally unfamiliar Hyperboreans, excising just cause and stressing unjust effect, he gives us Everybattle.

Howard's Brian is a lion in winter, a Christianizing champion whom only age bars from the forefront; Mr. Thomas's tent-shirking

Brian and brutal Tomar deserve each other.

Oh, and the fettered Conan first escaped his creator's unfettered imagination (and the Hyperboreans) in that letter from Robert E. Howard to P. Schuyfer Miller which has provided the blueprint for so many pastiches; Conan is said to have hated his enslavers with a hate "which lasted all his life and later affected his policies as king of Aquilonia. Captured by them, he escaped southward...." There you have it; the chains of memory are more adamantine than any forged in Castle Haloga.

In the light of a provocative passage in the second half of REH's "Hyborian Age" essay about the by-then ancient feud between Aquilonia and Hyperborea, Conan may be speaking for his dynastic descendants as well when he tells Dunlang that he has many

Hyperboreans to kill.

In 1970 CONAN THE BARBARIAN #3 was sufficient unto itself; by the 90s "Conan Comics Chronology" Mr. Thomas was careful to identify Tomar as an ambitious under-king (whose downfall and the eclipse of Borri play right into the grasping hands of Hypertoreans-come-lately Vammatar, Louhi, and Torumjumala). Will Tomar's widow Kormlada continue as a factor in Hyperborean power politics? Her style of trickery wouldn't be likely to work on Witchmen, while Vammatar would have had Tomar and/or Malachi back on their feet as zombies the page after the last page of "Grey God."

Be that as it may, Kormlada and Eevin are two of the most compelling characters in the entire Conan saga. (If only there had been panels to spare for Robert E. Howard's conversation between the two of them!) Eevin is compelling because compelled to see a future which is no future for her. With this elf-maid, whose race was old when the land was young, we catch Howard's only hint of Faerie, of the forest-fast Fair Folk found (only when they wish to be) in so much epic fantasy. Even today (Eevin today!), to see more of Eevin seeing more would make for a Conan story passing strange and passing fair.

Steven B. Tompkins 415 Sixth Ave., Apt. 3F Brooklyn, NY 11215

You must have a crystal ball out there in Flatbush, Steven, because while plotting "The Choosers of the Slain" for CTA #6, Roy Thomas too decided Kormlada and Eevin were too good to languish forever unseen except in reprints. You'll see the result somewhere before long— whether in CTA or in the pages of SAVAGE SWORD!

Thanks for reminding us of the source of the quote about Conan's escape from the Hyperboreans. It had momentarily slipped our minds while writing the text piece for CC #3, though we'd looked it up since. And your contrasting of Howard's prose story "The Grey God Passes" with our adaptation thereof just reminded us to remind our readers to look up the REH originals whenever possible. We're certainly not trying to eclipse them here at Marvel!

By the way, we forgot to mention it in CONAN CLASSIC #3, but did you know CONAN THE BARBARIAN #3 is rarer than #2? Due to some sort of freaky snafu we never quite figured out, there were distribution problems with #3, and it now commands a higher price as a back issue than does #2, a reversal of the usual. Maybe Borri, the

Grim Grey God, had something to do with it

CONAN THE MARVELOUS

AN ONGOING HISTORY OF MARVEL'S CONAN THE BARBARIAN COMICS BY ROY THOMAS

A TANGLED WEB...

We owe you an explanation. Two, really.

First: Sadly, because of the current crowded conditions on the stands, this is the final issue of CONAN CLASSIC. There really isn't much more we can add to that statement.

Second: Because the next CONAN THE BARBARIAN issue in order, #11, contained the 35-page adaptation of Robert E. Howard's "Rogues in the House," and we couldn't have squeezed all of it into one comic — and since CTB #12 spotlighted a Conan story just 16 pages long - new editor Mike Lackey opted for reprinting the next regular-length story, "Web of the Spider God," from CTB #13.

It's well worth printing, both for its own sake, and because it marked my first collaboration with another living writer on Conan's

Marvel adventures.

By 1971 John Jakes had already written quite a body of scienceas the author first of fiction and fantasy; but his worldwide fame the Bicentennial series of novels known as the Kent Family Chronicles, then of North and South, Love and War, Homeland, and other historical novels which, by this date, have sold 60,000,000 copies worthwide, with virtually all of his output likewise being adapted into prestigious TV mini-series.

In '71, though, John was best known as the creator of "Brak the Barbarian," a blond hero birthed as an unabashed tribute to Conan; Brak had already appeared in a number of stories which had been collected in paperbacks. These tales, I thought then and I think now, came about as close as anyone has come to capturing the

spirit of REH's prose and verve.

Writing John through his agent, I invited him to contribute a brief plot, though I could offer him only a token sum, since I'd be paying him out of my own pocket. Fortunately for us all, John accepted the good-natured challenge. His return letter began, "Hope you can use the enclosed, because I had a ball doing it - as you can

see, your letter springboarded it."

His synopsis (just over three double-spaced pages) was a response to my suggestion that the story be set in Yezud, the City of the Spider God mentioned by Howard in passing in "The People of the Black Circle," but never described by Conan's creator. I doubt I suggested more than that, except perhaps there ought to be a reasonably big spider in it, even bigger than the one in CTB #4, "The Tower of the Elephant."

John did a bit more writing for Marvel after that initial effort another plot for CTB, one for KULL, plus an original comics tale of Brak. Later, Marvel licensed the Brak stories, a couple of which

were adapted in SAVAGE TALES.

Then John wrote the Kent Family Chronicles, and the rest is a

very much ongoing history.

Though John and I spoke by phone once or twice, we never met until — early in 1992, soon after my wife and I had moved to South Carolina — I received an invitation to a function at the University of S.C. at which John was to be guest speaker. Both because of my admiration for his work, and out of curiosity to see if he'd remember (let alone admit to) his deep dark past as a writer of pulpish fiction, Dann and I attended - and so, at a cocktail party, I brashly introduced myself at last to John Jakes.

I wasn't really surprised to learn that, far from hiding his fantasy roots, John proudly admitted to still having the splash page of CTB

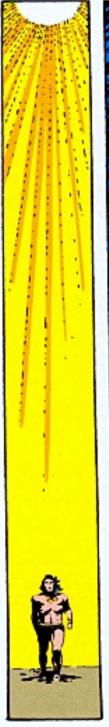
#13 framed in his home!

The next year, USC sponsored a special exhibit of John's work, from his early fantasy right up through his latest novel, Homeland, which had received mouth-wateringly good reviews from serious critics. And there in the exhibit, along with everything else, were copies such deathless works as Brak the Barbarian, Brak and the Sorceress, Brak: The Mark of the Demon, and a pair of books with wonderful titles: Six-Gun Planet and Mention My Name in Atlantis (the latter partly a Conan parody).

John Jakes — a real American success story.

And it couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

As a last-issue bonus, we've printed below John's synopsis, which was adapted by Barry Windsor-Smith and myself into CONANTHE BARBARIAN #13. And incidentally, not only will John — though he hardly needs it now - receive half my meagre wages for writing this text page, but that munificent sum will be exactly the same amount he was paid for the synopsis the first time around!

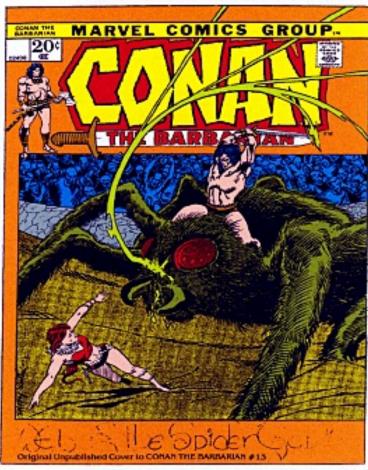




Who says there's such a thing as progress in the arts? Anyway, here for the first time ever is John's fine, flavorful plot. Barry and I had to alter an item and here there in the interest of keeping story length down (and it still ran a bit longer than usual), but it's a rouser!

And now, without further ado:

CONAN CLASSIC 11 (ABRIL DE 1995), "CONAN THE MARVELOUS" (CONTINUAÇÃO), por Roy Thomas E CONAN THE BARBARIAN 12 (JANEIRO DE 1972), SINOPSE por John Jakes.



"WEB OF THE SPIDER-GOD" a "Conan" synopsis by JOHN JAKES

Somewhere east of Ophir -

Conan is set upon by thieving nomadic marauders, one of whom has a face covered with livid scars. They steal his horse, sword, dagger, ornmanets — even his food and water.

He wanders for days, growing delirious with hunger and thirst until he sees a ghastly vision: first, a dark, mysterious city; then, human sacrifices being offered to a gigantic spider-thing by hooded priests. One of the sacrifices is Conan himself! (NOTE: seen only from a distance — his trappings look like Conan's.) Finally — the city crumbling to destruction, as if, in the vision, Conan has brought its ruin at the price of his own life.

Conan comes across Thanix, ancient, wizened peasant of Corinthia. Conan is half dead. Old Thanix shares the last of his food and water; says that his daughter Lea was abducted from the fields of their farm by marauders.

By a band that included a man with many scars? Conan asks. Thanix shakes his head. By the hooded priests of Omm, the Many-Legged Destroyer — the demon-thing worshipped in the dark, isolated Zamorian city, Yezud. Priests roam across the borders of Khauran, Koth, Brythunia, Corinthia, plucking up the unwary of "foreign blood" to propitiate the god at its annual rite.

Conan owes the old man his life. They'll press on to Yezud, try to save the girl. Later — they crest a hill at twilight. There — splendid and sinister — Yezud, city of the vision! City whose destruction Conan foresaw — brought about by his own death!

Cloaked, the two approach the gate. In the city, torches glare, pipes skirl, timbrels thud — the rites have already begun! Admitted by the gate guards, Conan suddenly seems clumsy, stumbles — is discovered as an outlander. He fights bare-handed, but loses. He and Thanix are hustled through jeering, mocking crowds —

Thanix whispers that Conan's "clumsiness" seemed unnatural. It was! Conan figured: fastest way to locate Lea is to be captured himself. But Conan isn't all cool craft — a glare-eyed priest passing on horse-back hurls a taunt. Conan lunges. Instant enmity! The priest — Modar, high in the rank of priests — promises delicious revenge at the rites. Later — in the slime-walled dungeons underground — among a mixed bag of captured sacrifices: Conan reunited Thanix and Lea, also meeting Valk of Shadizar, a soldier — an engineer of the Zamorian king sent to spy on Yezud, a city repugnant even to the monarch. Yezud sits on a fault in the earth — honeycombed underneath with worked-out mines and empty watercourses. Valk was exploring there, calculating the stresses that, he says, could bring Yezud down without so much as one of the king's swords being raised! Just a few boulders shifted here and there would do it! Ruffians living below-ground caught Valk, turned him over to the priests —

A roar from above. A crowd! The first sacrifices to Omm are taken! Distant shrieks, then — priests come. The old man and Conan next, by order of Modar! Lea clings to her father, going too. In the passage, Conan jumps his guards — the distraction allows Valk, several others, to escape before more guards rush in-- Conan is caught again, hurried

on - past a cell where someone yells to him.

Into the unspeakable Temple of Omm — a kind of roofed arena — torchlit — incense-filled — the lusting spectators are mere shadows in the vaulted dark. In an ichor-glistening web among the remains of his victims — Omm! Modar steps up with dagger to (try to) nick Conan's arm, arouse the glutted spider-thing with the scent of fresh blood. Conan gets the dagger in a fast maneuver — and sends Modar — hurled bodily! — to death in the web.

Aroused now, the spider comes for Conan — Lea is screaming in terror. Conan turns angrily to tell her that will do no good — that maneuver costs him dearly. Flick!! He's in the web, caught by one of

the hairy arms of the spider-thing.

He battles it to the death, wounding it mortally with the dagger. Enraged priests, onlookers converge to slay him — Thanix is killed, but before they can harm Lea or Conan, the ground rocks, Valk has undermined the city! Lea over his shoulder, Conan breaks free in the eusuing panic — the temple begins to crumble — just as a last batch of sacrifices is brought in and flung in the web. Conan sees "himself" — the looter who stole and wore some of his trappings — devoured by the dying Omm. By Crom! The looter, scar-face, must have been the source of the voice that yelled in recognition in the dungeon! The dark vision is fulfilled!

A berserker now, Conan fights free of crumbling, crashing Yezud — to stand at last on a hilltop, watching the ruins collapse in the moonlight. A weary figure joins them — Valk, escaped from the mine shafts via one of the underground watercourses. Conan puts Lea in the care of the soldier of the Zamorian king and goes his way under the moon —

- END -

There you have it. John didn't write his synopsis in the regular comic-book fashion, nor did I ask him to, but all the elements are there, and Barry and I had a blast turning them into CONAN THE BARBARIAN #13.

Thanks again, John — but when are we going to see more of Brak the Barbarian?

Oh, and one final surprise for this final issue:

Barry originally penciled and inked a beautiful cover for CTB #13 which showed Conan riding/stabbing the huge Omm. However, editor in chief Stan Lee — noticing that covers with humanoid foes seemed to sell better than those showing Conan fighting animal-like monsters — decided he wanted a different one. So Barry drew another, which had less to do with the story, but at least featured a web motif. The "discarded" cover didn't see print until CONAN SAGA #3 — and this is the first time it's ever been done in color!

No, don't thank us — it's the least we could do for those who've made Conan a Marvel institution for the past 25 years!

See you around, friend, and remember -

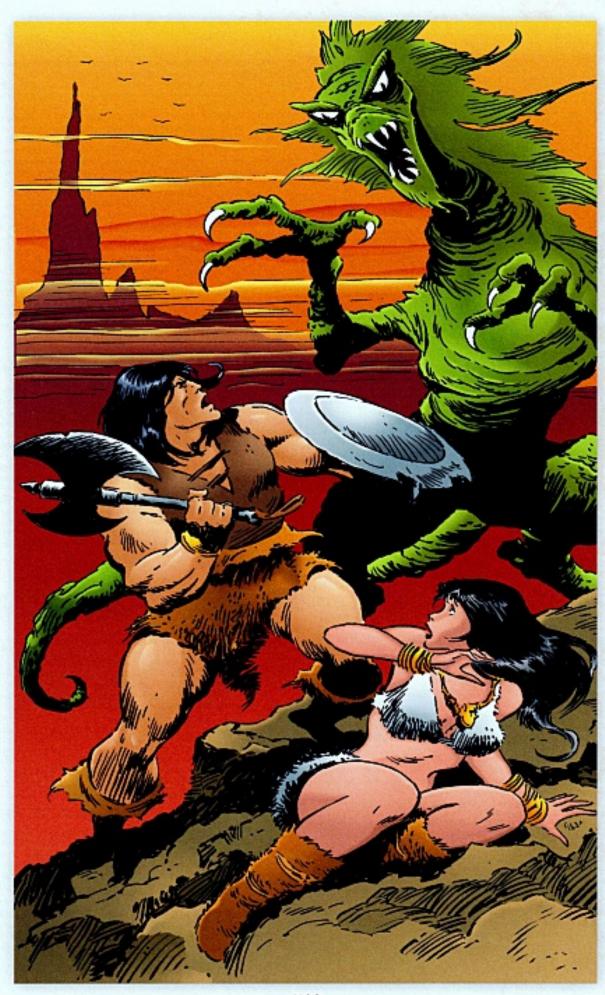
The Hyborian Age lives!

OTHER CONAN MAGS NOW ON SALE!

CONANTHE ADVENTURER #11: The young Cimmerian once more encounters the mysterious blind warrior from issue #5! But they're both reluctant guests of the Torturers of Ong, as things move into high gear in the quest for the Talisman of Tolometh, courtesy of Roy Thomas and Rafael Kayanan — with a special backup feature drawn by Audwyn Newman! Two great artists — one classy mag!

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #232: This is it! The showdown between Conan and Red Sonja—and their deadly mirror-dopplegangers, conjured up by the evil Tuzun Thune—and by Roy Thomas, Mike Docherty, and E.R. Cruz. Plus Part III of the Sonja solo tale, "The Ring of Ikribu," with art by Esteban Maroto.

THE ESSENTIAL CONAN VOL. 1 (JULHO DE 2000), CAPA (ABAIXO) E CONTRACAPA (PRÓXIMA PÁGINA) Arte de John Buscema e Marie Javins.



Lançado nos últimos dias da posse dos direitos de publicação de Conan pela Marvel, *The Essential Conan vol. 1* reimprimiu *Conan, The Barbarian 1-25,* com uma nova arte de capa por John Buscema, um de seus últimos trabalhos antes de falecer em janeiro de 2002.



THE CRONICLES OF CONAN VOL. 1: THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT AND OTHER STORIES (OUTUBRO DE 2003).

REIMPRIMINDO: Conan the Barbarian 1 a 8

POSFÁCIO: Roy Thomas

UM ENGANO DE 50 DÓLARES... ALGUNS COMENTÁRIOS PESSOAIS SOBRE CONAN, O BÁRBARO, POR ROY THOMAS

Se não fosse por uma pequena quantia de 50 dólares, e talvez uma certo medo da minha parte, eu poderia muito bem nunca ter escrito sequer uma edição do Conan, o Bárbaro para a Marvel Comics, quem dirá mais de 200 delas.

No final da década de 1960, como editor associado de Stan Lee e entre revistas como Os Vingadores, O Incrivel Hulk, Os X-Men, Demolidor, Doutor Estranho etc., eu tive que ler muitas mensagens enviadas aos escritórios da Marvel. Não tanto quanto Stan, claro. Nosso destemido líder considerou seu dever obrigatório ler todas as cartas que o secretário marcava como importantes, e muitas vezes ele rabiscava "para conhecimento" ou alguma outra nota enigmática no topo de uma missiva e a passava para mim.

E uma coisa que nós dois notamos ao longo da década foi que nossos leitores estavam nos pedindo para romances de fantasia ao formato de quadrinhos, mesmo que isso não fosse algo pelo qual a Marvel fosse famosa. Eles queriam Edgar Rice Burroughs (Tarzan, John Carter etc.), Doc Savage, O Senhor dos Anéis de J.R.R. Tolkien — e Robert E. Howard, especialmente seu personagem mais conhecido, Conan.

E nós ouvimos. Na verdade, antes do final da década de 1970, a Marvel viria a produzir quadrinhos sobre tudo isso, exceto Tolkien — nós tentamos, mas sua editora não queria saber de quadrinhos.

O próprio Stan não sabia ao certo o que os leitores queriam dizer quando diziam que deveríamos publicar Conan ou algum outro personagem de "espada & magia", e por um tempo eu mesmo tinha apenas uma noção vaga do que era "espada & magia". Alguns anos antes, quando a primeira coletânea da editora Lancer das obras de Robert E. Howard, Conan, o Aventureiro, foi publicada, eu a havia escolhido mais pela capa de Frank Frazetta que por qualquer outra coisa, e esperava que fosse algo parecido com John Carter de Marte. Só foi preciso ler as primeiras páginas da história "Povo do Círculo Negro" para saber que eu havia sido enganado pela palavra "Atlântida" na contracapa e deixei a brochura em uma prateleira por dois ou três anos.

Algum tempo depois, li o livro de Lin Carter, Thongor na Cidade dos Mágicos, outro livro com uma capa de Frazetta e um herói que combinava conotações de John Carter e (como eu já percebia na época) Conan, o Cimério. O livro podia não ser muito original, mas eu gostei.

Então, um dia, Stan e eu estávamos respondendo a todos esses pedidos de um quadrinho de "espada & magia" na Marvel, e ele fez uma sugestão que mudou o curso da minha vida criativa. Ele me pediu que escrevesse um memorando ao editor Martin Goodman para tentar convencê-lo de que deveríamos licenciar os direitos de adaptação de algum herói de espada & magia como personagem de quadrinhos. Nenhum em particular — definitivamente não o Conan — apenas "um herói de espada & magia".

Escrevi um memorando de três páginas que gostaria de ter guardado, porque evidentemente causou uma boa impressão em Goodman, que o mencionava em várias ocasiões posteriores quando nos encontrávamos (o que não era frequente). Eu enfatizei no memorando que a espada & magia, embora geralmente ambientada em um mundo ancestral fictício, apresentava vários elementos que o tornavam ideal para a conversão em quadrinhos. Ou seja, havia um herói musculoso... havia mulheres bonitas... e havia vilões hediondos e, mais particularmente, monstros hediondos e poderosos. Goodman comprou meu raciocínio, e eu fui autorizado a oferecer até 150 dólares por edição (o que valia mais na época, mas ainda assim nada fantástico) pelos direitos a algum personagem de nossa escolha. Por que não simplesmente criamos nosso próprio herói de espada & magia, não tenho certeza até hoje – teria sido mais a cara Marvel – mas não o fizemos, e acho que deu certo, para Marvel e para o Conan.

Exceto que o herói que eu persegui, inicialmente, era o Thongor da Lemúria de Lin Carter!

Não que Conan não tenha me passado pela cabeça, é claro. Além de todas as cartas dos leitores (que certamente mencionaram Conan com muito mais frequência do que Thongor), passei muito tempo com o artista Gil Kane, que era fã de Robert E. Howard desde pelo menos a década de 1950, quando a Gnome Press começou a reimprimir os contos de Conan. De fato, Gil possuía um conjunto completo desses volumes — que mais tarde comprei dele e ainda possuo.

Mas Stan e eu tínhamos calculado que Conan, que já contava com várias coleções populares naquela época, sem dúvida estaria além da nossa capacidade financeiramente. Talvez Lin, cujo nome eu conhecia dos fanzines de ficção científica no início dos anos 1960, fosse mais viável. Então, fiz uma oferta ao agente dele. O próprio Lin gostava de quadrinhos e da ideia de Thongor virar um herói da Marvel, mas seu agente bateu o pé, provavelmente esperando que aumentássemos a proposta. Mas não dava. Quando Martin Goodman dizia "150", ele queria dizer "150" e não "151". Além disso, eu me lembro que Stan gostava mais do nome Thongor do que Conan ou Kull... Tinha mais cara de herói de quadrinhos.

De tempos em tempos, pelos meses seguintes, Stan perguntava como as coisas estavam indo e eu tive que relatar a falta de progresso. E então, certa noite, peguei uma cópia do último livro de Conan, Conan da Ciméria, olhei para a introdução de L. Sprague de Camp e vi o nome e até o endereço do "agente literário da propriedade intelectual de Robert E. Howard", um tal Glenn Lord. Por capricho, enviei uma carta a Glenn oferecendo a ele a quantia grandiloquente de 200 dólares por edição pelos direitos da Marvel de publicar histórias em quadrinhos do Conan. Expliquei educadamente que não tinha margem de manobra para as negociações, mas que esse quadrinho poderia dar ao herói uma audiência totalmente nova e, portanto, valer a pena.

Surpreendentemente, Glenn concordou — e tínhamos fechado negócio.

Foi quando percebi o que tinha feito. Eu tinha aumentado a oferta da Marvel — de Martin Goodman em um terço, de 150 para 200 dólares por edição, por causa do meu constrangimento com a antiga quantia tão baixa. Mas o que eu faria se Goodman se recusasse a aceitar o aumento?

Até aquele momento, eu não sabia se seria o roteirista dos quadrinhos de Conan. Eu poderia ter deixado com, digamos, o jovem Gerry Conway, que já havia vendido um ou dois romances de ficção científica, ou outra pessoa, essa tarefa. Mas agora percebi que era melhor escrever pelo menos a primeira edição ou mais, para que, se Goodman repentinamente notasse a diferença e quisesse seus 50 dólares extras de volta, eu poderia tirar essa soma do meu pagamento. É claro que, naquela época, eu estava apenas recebendo algo como 15 dólares por página, então eu escreveria várias páginas de graça. Mas isso era melhor do que sair por aí à procura de emprego. Imaginei que escreveria uma ou duas edições, depois a entregaria a outro escritor e voltaria a me concentrar nos meus amados super-heróis.

Assim, involuntariamente, me tornei roteirista de mais de 200 edições de Conan, o Bárbaro, A Espada Selvagem de Conan e Rei Conan, dois anos de uma tira de jornal de Conan, dois álbuns dramáticos, vários desenhos para TV, além de ser, no início dos anos 80, consultor do filme Conan, o Bárbaro, e co-roteirista dos cinco primeiros rascunhos de sua sequência, Conan, o Destruidor.

Para o título da história em quadrinhos, sugeri Conan, o Bárbaro — uma frase que nunca foi exatamente usada, palavra por palavra, em qualquer uma das duas dúzias de contos publicados do REH porque esse tinha sido o título de uma das capas duras da Gnome e, portanto, não tinha sido usado como o nome de nenhum dos livros mais recentes com os quais os leitores estavam muito mais familiarizados.

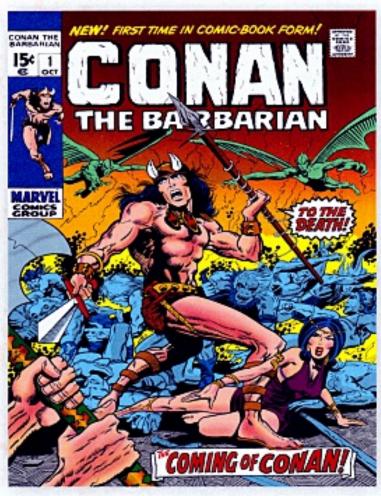
Stan e eu nunca tivemos dúvida sobre quem deveria ser o artista da nova revista. Seria John Buscema, com quem eu já havia trabalhado no Namor e nos Vingadores. John não estava familiarizado com Conan, mas eu já tinha decidido ler todos os livros de Howard àquela altura e emprestei vários para John. Ele estava em êxtase. Era isso, não super-heróis, o tipo de coisa que ele queria fazer! Quando começamos?

Não começamos, como se sabe. Ah, escrevi uma sinopse de uma história para apresentar o jovem Conan aos leitores e enviei para John; mas quando ele estava prestes a começar a desenhá-lo, Goodman determinou: chame um artista mais barato para o Conan!

Por alguma razão, Martin Goodman não se enfureceu nem me demitiu quando os contratos foram redigidos, exigindo um pagamento de 200 dólares por edição, em vez dos 150 que ele havia autorizado. Mas agora, sem saber o quanto Conan venderia em 1970, ele queria compensar a aposta e o valor da licença no custo de produção. Isso significava que John Buscema estava fora, porque naturalmente ele recebia os maiores valores da empresa e excederia nosso orçamento. Gil Kane, que receba algo semelhante, também foi eliminado.

Stan sugeriu alguns artistas menores que trabalhavam para a Marvel, mas eu não achava que eles trariam o tipo de personalidade que Conan precisava. Por isso, sugeri o jovem Barry Smith, àquela época residindo em sua terra natal, a Inglaterra. Barry havia trabalhado um pouco em X-Men, Demolidor, histórias de mistério, até Vingadores — a maioria escrita por mim. De fato, Barry e eu tínhamos feito uma história estrelando um protótipo de Conan que chamamos de Starr, o Matador, em um dos títulos de "mistério" da Marvel, que não tinha se saído mal.

Então Buscema fora, Smith dentro — e o resto, como se costuma dizer, é pseudo-história.



Levamos uma edição ou duas para pegarmos o ritmo, o que pode ser notado ao ler as primeiras histórias. Eu ainda estava tentando sentir a escrita (e me incomodo muito com pelo menos alguns balões em Conan 1), e não sei se, se eu tivesse que repetir, teria pedido algo tão gráfico como a cena do "homem do espaço", que pedi para o Barry desenhar, para estabelecer que isso estava acontecendo em um passado distante. Quanto a Barry, ele parece ter literalmente paralisado, não desenhando nem o herói nem a história no nível que Stan e eu sabíamos que ele era capaz. A certa altura, ele chegou a desenhar Conan derrubando um demônio alado num soco só; esse se tornou um dos vários painéis que, como editor de fato, eu o mandei cortar e substituir por um novo desenho. Acho que foi Stan quem decidiu que sua página de abertura também deveria ser substituída por um desenho mais simbólico. A arte-final profissional de Dan Adkins ajudou um pouco nas páginas internas, assim como a finalização da capa por John Verpoorten.

Mesmo assim, tudo viria a se encaixar, tanto para o Barry como pra mim.

Com o número 2, encontrei um esboço sobre homens-macacos no norte gelado num ensaio pseudohistórico de Robert E. Howard "A Era Hiboriana", e
escrevi uma trama a partir disso. Barry desenhou a
história como algo mais próximo de uma adaptação de
Edgar Rice Burroughs do que uma a partir das criações
de Howard, mas não havia tempo para redesenhar e, de
qualquer forma, estava muito bom — muito melhor que
a primeira. Com o irmão mais novo de John Buscema,
Sal, colorizando (ele nós podíamos pagar!), seguimos
em frente. A história, uma das duas únicas com data de
1970 na capa, foi prontamente nomeada para um Prêmio Shazam pela própria Academia de Artes em Quadrinhos.

Para a edição 3, inventei uma história que usava um nome de um poema de Robert E. Howard — Zukala — para um vilão bruxo. Era uma história mediana, e Barry a desenhou bem, mesmo que tigres não fossem seu ponto forte e Zukala tenha acabado parecendo um refugo do Doutor Estranho de Steve Ditko. Barry redesenhou algumas coisas no final da história. Ele fez um demônio alado de repente ficar "cansado" — pelo menos essa foi a explicação que ele me deu — e cair para a morte quando empurrado pela janela da torre. Possível, talvez, mas não satisfatório. Além disso, decidimos que a filha de Zukala não deveria morrer no final.

Porém, como se viu, "Filha de Zukala" se tornou Conan 5, não 3. Já chego lá.

No 4, decidi fazer algo diferente. Desde o início, eu queria adaptar histórias de Robert E. Howard assim como criar as minhas, mas nosso contrato com a licença de REH nos deu direitos apenas para usar o personagem do Conan, e não histórias específicas. Agora, recebi permissão de Glenn Lord em uma carta para adaptar a história em que o cimério é cronologicamente o mais novo — "Torre do Elefante", que rapidamente se tornara minha história favorita de Conan. A Marvel ou eu — suspeito que a Marvel — pagou um pouco a mais pelo direito de adaptar a história, mas a esta altura não faço mais ideia de como consegui isso nem quanto custou. Trabalhar com a prosa de Howard, e não apenas minhas duas páginas de anotações, aparentemente deixou o

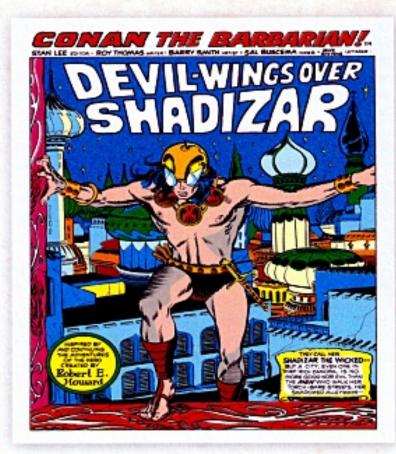
Barry empolgado, e ele fez um trabalho maravilhoso. Assim que Barry desenhou "Torre do Elefante", não tinha mais como voltar atrás.

Eu também sabia que Howard havia escrito outras belas histórias pseudo-históricas, muitas das quais poderiam ser facilmente adaptadas em contos do Conan. Na verdade, o escritor L. Sprague de Camp já havia feito exatamente isso com várias histórias de REH em capas duras da Gnome, e estava fazendo o mesmo nas brochuras. Achei que essa era uma boa ideia, então sugeri a Glenn que eu poderia fazer o mesmo nos quadrinhos, e ele concordou — novamente por uma mixaria. A história que adaptei primeiro foi uma chamada "O Deus Cinzento Falece", ambientada na Irlanda antiga — e a combinação da prosa de Howard com o cenário deve ter inspirado Barry, porque ele fez um belíssimo trabalho lírico no que se tornou nosso "O Crepúsculo do Deus Cinzento".

Nesse ponto, percebi que funcionava melhor do ponto de vista cronológico para criar o "Crepúsculo" na nº 3, depois utilizar a "Torre do Elefante" e guardar a "Filha de Zukala" para o nº 5. Foi o que fiz e a ordem de publicação de Conan 3 e 5 foi revertida. E isso se nota, com o último sendo um pouco mais cru do que os números 3 e 4, mais alinhado com o que Barry desenhou na número 2.

Por volta dessa época, os números de vendas de Conan, o Bárbaro 1 começaram a chegar, e parecia que tínhamos um sucesso em nossas mãos. As vendas foram muito boas, embora em pequenas tiragens.

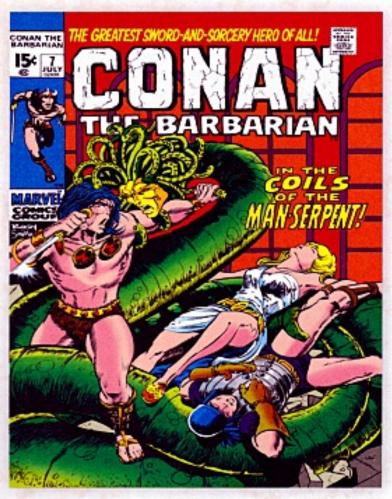
À minha maneira, fiquei tão inspirado quanto Barry e escrevi uma sinopse original para a 6, "Asas Demoníacas sobre Shadizar". Fiquei feliz quando, meses



depois, tanto esta como o número 4 se tornaram duas das cinco histórias nomeadas pela Academia como as melhores histórias em quadrinhos de 1971. Fiquei ainda mais orgulhoso quando ouvi dois dos meus colegas escritores profissionais falando sobre a história ser boa e ser uma adaptação de uma das histórias de Howard — já que cada palavra é, na verdade, minha, exceto algumas sugeridas por Barry.

A edição 7 foi baseada em uma história de Howard Conan, "O Deus na Urna", mas esse era um conto bem curto, e Barry e eu precisávamos "aumentá-lo". Fizemos isso numa noite enquanto eu estava visitando Londres pela primeira vez. No saguão do hotel onde minha esposa e eu estávamos, Barry e eu trabalhamos cena por cena, com Barry se empolgando e fazendo golpes de espada falsos; algumas pessoas nos olhavam de soslaio, até. Nós transformamos um vilão do sexo masculino em uma mulher (porque a história original não tinha personagens femininas), expandimos a cena da luta e mais algumas coisas, e criamos outra das minhas edições favoritas.

Enquanto isso, porém, as coisas não estavam indo tão bem para Conan como os relatórios de vendas iniciais haviam indicado. Levaria meses para que descobríssemos - estávamos trabalhando nas edições 12 e 13, mais ou menos — mas cada edição da 1 à 7 sofreu uma queda nas vendas em relação ao número anterior.



Como eu já deveria esperar, Stan Lee nos salvou. Stan admitiu que espada & magia não era a "praia" dele, mas estava contente por ter se tornado minha, agora que eu havia lido todo o cânone de Conan e decidido que não iria deixar as rédeas do roteiro com ninguém. Ele não leu as histórias, mas se ocupou principalmente com as capas, que eram um fator decisivo nas vendas. E ele viu uma coisa que não lhe agradava.

"Animais demais", ele me disse um dia na época do fechamento do nº 7. Tivemos demônios alados na capa da edição 1, que se saíram bem... e macacos na 2, e um deus gigante na 3. Mas depois disso Barry e eu ficamos muito "animalescos" por quatro edições em sequência. A número 4 mostrava Conan enfrentando a aranha gigante da história — a número 5 tinha uma mulher se transformando em uma tigresa saltadora — na número 6 ele estava lutando com um gigantesco morcego voador — e agora na número 7 ele estava lutando contra uma serpente gigante (mesmo que uma com cabeça humana e cabelos de cobra).

Stan queria que os inimigos de Conan, especialmente nas capas, fossem mais humanoides.

Bem, isso poderia ter acontecido de qualquer maneira, porque na 8 eu adaptei uma sinopse do REH que mostrava guerreiros mortos-vivos imponentes guardando um tesouro. Ainda assim, havia também um guardião bestial daquela cidade em ruínas — que Barry havia desenhado primorosamente como o maior monstro lagarto do mundo — e poderíamos ter sido tentados a colocá-lo na capa. Cumprindo a ordem de Stan, Barry desenhou Conan confrontando os esqueletos de armadura em vez do monstro.

Isso deixou Stan feliz — e, quando os números de vendas da edição 8 apareceram muitas luas depois e mostrou que, após um declínio em sete edições, esse foi o primeiro a aumentar as vendas no mês anterior, também fiquei em êxtase.

De fato, foi a capa e as vendas da edição 8 e 9 que livraram Conan, o Bárbaro do risco da extinção — depois de ela ter sido cancelada por um dia!

Mas essa já é outra história...

2003

Desde 1965, Roy Thomas trilhou uma longa e consagrada carreira no ramo das histórias em quadrinhos. Em 1999, em votação promovida por uma publicação especializada, foi eleito o quinto melhor roteirista do século 20, e o quarto editor mais enaltecido pelos leitores. Thomas já escreveu e editou revistas dos principais super-heróis da Marvel e da DC Comics, mas considera a transposição de Conan para os quadrinhos seu trabalho favorito e o ápice de sua carreira. Desde 1991, ele vive em uma vasta propriedade rural na Carolina do Sul com a esposa Dann e um "zoológico" com tucanos, calaus, chinchilas, cães, burros, porcos, gato, porquinhos-da-índia, patos e capivaras — nenhum dos quais chegou a aparecer em alguma capa de gibi.

THE CRONICLES OF CONAN VOL. 2: ROGUES IN THE HOUSE AND OTHER STORIES (2003).

compilando: Conan the Barbarian 9 a 13, e 16.

POSFÁCIO: Roy Thomas

POR TRÁS DAS ESPADAS:

ROY THOMAS RELEMBRA A HISTÓRIA POR TRÁS DAS HISTÓRIAS REUNIDAS NESTA SUPEREDIÇÃO MARVEL

Quando Conan, o Bárbaro alcançou as edições contidas neste volume de Dark Horse, eu estava razo-avelmente feliz com a mistura que estávamos criando — uma combinação de três tipos de contos: as ocasionais edições baseadas em uma saga de Robert E. Howard (onde se encaixassem cronologicamente), histórias originais e adaptações de histórias "não-Conan" do Howard para uma HQ do Conan (na linha do que L. Sprague de Camp fazia).

Conforme exposto por De Camp em seus esboços biográficos de Conan, parecia haver um período de meses, talvez um ano, entre "O Deus na Urna" e "Inimigos em Casa", que eu tinha tentado marcar para a 12 ou algo assim. Então, eu tinha que preencher esse período — de forma criativa, eu esperava.

O parágrafo de De Camp sobre a vida de Conan nessa época, impresso no volume de bolso de 1967 da editora Lancer, intitulado simplesmente Conan como introdução de "Inimigos", serviu como meu norte: "Um pouco desiludido com a possibilidade de evitar obstáculos sobrenaturais na busca obstinada de seu chamado (isto é, o roubo), e tendo tornado a Nemédia um ambiente acalorado demais para suas atividades ilícitas, Conan se dirige novamente ao sul. Chegando a uma das pequenas cidades-estados de Coríntia, ele volta a se ocupar da apropriação indébita de bens alheios. Contando cerca de 19 anos nessa época, é um jovem mais experiente e cauteloso, porém, continua tão desapegado da virtude pouco lucrativa da cautela quanto na primeira vez que pisou nos reinos do sul."

Se Conan tivesse sido um viajante da vida real, é claro, poderíamos supor que ele simplesmente teve uma viagem sem nada de excepcional entre Nemédia e Coríntia. Mas com uma edição ou três a preencher, tive que inventar aventuras que poderiam ocorrer na Estrada dos Reis. Assim, como a Coríntia de REH era um reino muito menos centralizado do que a pseudogermânica Nemédia, procurei explorar histórias que não envolvessem uma cidade, pois "Inimigos" teria um ambiente urbano. A essa altura, graças ao agente literário de REH Glenn Lord, eu já havia lido quase todos os escritos de Howard impressos naquela época — além de outros não impressos ainda — e lembrei da história "O Jardim do Medo", originalmente publicada em uma revista pulp chamada Marvel Tales, de julho a agosto de 1934.

Em "Jardim", um homem deficiente físico chamado James Allison, do mundo moderno, revive mentalmente sua vida anterior à Era do Gelo como Hunwolf, um bárbaro do povo nórdico Aesir. Depois de matar um rival que tentou sequestrar sua amada, Gudrun, ele foge com ela para um vale onde eles encontram uma tribo amigável de uma colina, dominada por um tirano alado de pele cor de ébano. Hunwolf, um herói nos mesmos moldes de Conan, resgata Gudrun porém, o aesir provoca o estouro de uma manada de mamutes na direção das flores carnívoras que cercam a fortaleza do tirano.

Mandei Barry esquecer a parte das lembranças de vidas passadas. E, como Conan já estava viajando com a traiçoeira Jenna a partir da edição 8, poderíamos deixar para lá a batalha com o rival; a tribo da montanha e o homem alado foram suficientes para sustentar uma história de dezenove páginas.

Eu gosto de pensar que Barry e eu adicionamos alguns toques legais em nossa adaptação de "Jardim" em um conto de Conan. Eu trabalhei bastante na língua da tribo e sabia exatamente o que cada membro da tribo estava dizendo nas primeiras páginas da história; mas, Crom que me perdoe, mas não faço mais a mínima ideia do que "Nadda Trodon!" quer dizer. Acredito que foi ideia de Barry fazer Conan andar entre os mamutes e estabelecer uma relação quase simbiótica com eles; eu duvidava que o Conan de Robert E. Howard fizesse algo do tipo, mas também não tinha 100% de certeza de que ele não faria, então segui os instintos de Barry. Ele também pode muito bem ter sugerido que a oitava página da história não tivesse texto. E adorei o terceiro painel dessa página, onde Barry mostrou a luz refratada em Conan acima e abaixo da superfície da água, algo bastante incomum nos quadrinhos no início dos anos 70.

Em um aspecto, no entanto, Barry e eu definitivamente conspiramos contra o Comics Code. Na 11º página, os painéis 3 a 5 mostram a visão que Conan tem das flores que cercam a torre, nas quais o homem alado acaba de lançar um dos homens da tribo. O bárbaro vê algo surpreendente o suficiente para fazê-lo largar a faca, mas pela arte e pela legenda não há como dizer exatamente o quê. Fizemos o colorista mostrar uma evolução da tonalidade das flores ao longo dos três painéis, de branco rosado a um rosa sólido e, enfim, um vermelho vivo. A ideia clara — pelo menos quando o leitor visse os painéis em cores — era que as plantas







carnívoras haviam absorvido o sangue das vítimas. O censor do Code, no entanto, por fazer a vistoria antes da finalização da revista, não via nada além de um trio de painéis
em preto e branco inócuo e, portanto, não podia exigir de
nós que a sequência fosse modificada por ser horripilante
demais. Não me lembro de que alguém no Code tenha
notado a maneira como os despistamos quando o livro
foi publicado. Talvez ninguém no Code realmente leia
quadrinhos, exceto no estágio da arte original. Fico feliz,
porque o editor Stan Lee provavelmente teria esfolado
Barry e eu vivos por enganar o Código dessa maneira. Ele
sabia que, se as pessoas do Código se zangassem com uma
coisa, poderiam encontrar um milhão de maneiras de se
vingar de histórias futuras.

Lembro-me de que vários leitores também ficaram surpresos e impressionados quando o painel 4 da penúltima página da história ficou em silêncio, sem legenda ou balão de palavras, enquanto Conan e o homem alado atravessavam os estilhaços quebrados quando o topo da torre cai abaixo deles. Hoje em dia, é claro, é difícil pensar que algo assim faria tanto barulho — mas, no contexto de uma história em quadrinhos da Marvel em 1971, esse painel se destacou.

Conan, o Bárbaro 10, por pura coincidência, chegou no momento em que o editor Martin Goodman aumentou as páginas internas de todos os seus quadrinhos de 32 para 48 por um preço de capa de 25 centavos, o que significava preencher cerca de 34 dessas páginas com material novo, já que a Marvel não tinha acesso a muito material verdadeiramente antigo para reimprimir. Portanto, a história principal teria que ter 23 páginas, em vez de 19.

Poderíamos ter usado a edição 10 para adaptar a história de Conan, "Inimigos em Casa", exceto por um pequeno detalhe: no primeiro parágrafo dessa história, Robert E. Howard faz um detalhado floshback sobre como Conan se foi parar em uma cela no início do conto. Havia estofo suficiente naquele parágrafo para servir de ponto de partida para uma edição inteira, então Barry e eu começamos a expandi-lo.

O floshback da prosa conta que Conan se vingou de um sacerdote infame do deus Anu porque este último fez com que um ladrão amigo dele, um gunderlandês (referindo-se a uma região da Aquilônia civilizada), fosse sentenciado a morte por enforcamento. Conan se vinga, cortando a cabeça do sacerdote. Curiosamente, na sinopse de uma página do Howard que tínhamos usado como base da edição 8, o meio-inimigo, o meiocompanheiro do bárbaro tinha sido um gunderlandês, e é tentador suspeitar que Howard queria que eles fossem a mesma pessoa.

"A Ira de Anu!" teve seus momentos, incluindo alguns que nos trouxeram alguns problemas com o Comics Code. Por um lado, enforcamento era um evento raro em uma história em quadrinhos naqueles dias. Quando Barry mostrou o enforcamento em uma sequência de cinco painéis — mesmo que fosse apenas a parte de baixo do corpo do gunderlandês, primeiro se debatendo, depois sem vida —, tive medo de que o Código nos fizesse redesenhar a sequência inteira, em uma edição que já estava um tanto atrasada porque sua história era várias páginas maior que a anterior. Mas o Código não se opôs, graças a Deus.

E adorei a maneira como Barry resolveu a questão de Conan decapitar o sacerdote do mal — já que decapitação era bem pouco provável de ser aprovada naqueles bons tempos que não voltam mais. O sacerdote era, digamos, um homem largo que claramente amava comida gordurosa. Então, na penúltima página, Conan se afasta da cabeça inerte do sacerdote e, nesse quadrinho, não há nem sinal de um rotundo corpo sem vida para bloquear nossa visão do cenário. Foi a maneira sutil de Barry indicar que a cabeça não estava mais conectada ao corpo, e havia rolado alguns metros pelo piso. É claro que teríamos negado qualquer tentativa de esconder algo do Código, mas eles não pareceram notar.

Então, o que eles notaram, que nos forçou a fazer mudanças para receber seu selo de aprovação?



Bem, Conan mata o sacerdote (reconhecidamente) desonesto e muito mau da história — mas não é punido por sua ação. Isso ia contra as diretrizes do Comics Code, escrito em meados dos anos 50. Em vão, argumentei com Len Darvin (um advogado de quem eu gostava, a nível pessoal), do Code, que Conan receberia sua punição na próxima edição, que começaria com ele em uma cela. Len insistiu que eu reescrevesse os recordatórios no painel final da história, em que Conan fica

de pé frente ao túmulo de seu amigo gunderlandês. E foi o que fiz, com uma frase vaga e rebuscada sobre como "... nenhum calabouço que espreite seu futuro incerto jamais será capaz de oprimir seu coração indomável... tanto quanto a morte de um amigo atraiçoado." Aquilo aplacou Len e a edição recebeu o selo: "Aprovado". Apto para consumo pelos jovens da América.

Conan 11 foi outra edição de tamanho dobrado, e Barry e eu decidimos encarar o problema e contar toda a história de "Inimigos em Casa" nas 34 páginas da história que tínhamos, em vez de dividi-la em duas edições e preencher a segunda metade da revista com reimpressões ou material não-Conan, como eu fiz na nº 10.

Mais uma vez, as coisas pareciam se encaixar naturalmente. No final da edição 8, parecia adequado que Conan fugisse com a loira traiçoeira Jenna — ela, que havia roubado seu ouro em "Shadizar" na edição 6. Jenna foi um substituto útil para o Gudrun de Hunwolf no 9. E no 10, ela se encaixava perfeitamente nos eventos contados por REH no parágrafo introdutório que usamos como ponto de partida para essa edição: Conan está em uma cela no início de "Inimigos" porque foi entregue às autoridades por uma "mulher infiel". Jenna não existia na obra de Robert E. Howard — então, Barry e eu fomos forçados a inventá-la.

A prosa de Howard não diz especificamente que Conan está na cama com a traidora quando é capturado, mas isso parecia um caminho lógico. Mais uma vez, Barry optou por ultrapassar um pouco os limites, mostrando Jenna claramente nua na cama. Uma tomada bastante atrevida para 1971, acredite. Mesmo aqui, porém, Barry acrescentou um toque especial: moscas zumbindo para todo lado, sem nenhum objetivo maior além de adicionar atmosfera a esse sombrio "quarto de hotel" coríntio na área urbana conhecida como Labirinto. Era mesmo um grande prazer trabalhar com Barry Smith.

Depois disso, ele e eu acompanhamos de perto os eventos de "Inimigos" durante a maior parte da história. Howard nunca disse exatamente em que reino ela acontece - foi o De Camp que a localizou em Coríntia mas isso não importava. Mais uma vez, na página 1, quando Conan esfaqueia o amante/co-conspirador de Jenna, Barry indicou que o golpe de punhal de Conan havia atravessado seu torso, de uma maneira que não mostrava sangue - e o Comics Code nos deixou escapar impunes. Embora eles possam ser por vezes imprevisíveis e arbitrários, acredito sinceramente que Len e seus leitores viram que Conan era para um público mais maduro que o corriqueiro dos quadrinhos que chegava às suas mesas, e eles nos davam uma margem de manobra quando podiam. Mas talvez seja apenas minha imaginação.

De qualquer forma, a sequência de cinco painéis que Barry criou na parte inferior da página 11, creio, é magistral: duas tomadas em meio-plano retratando os degraus, seguidas por um corte para a "câmera" posicionada acima da escadaria que, quadro a quadro, vai fechando o foco na face enfurecida de Conan.



A cena em que Conan joga sua traidora em uma fossa ou em algo do tipo é uma das mais famosas do cânone de REH, e acho que fizemos jus a ela.

A única mudança real que fizemos na história foi a substituição de uma segunda quadrilha de ladrões que, coincidentemente, estava invadindo a mansão de Nabonidus ao mesmo tempo que o cimério. Como eles não serviam para muito mais do que serem mortos pelo gorila humanoide Thak, nós os dispensamos e tivemos uma boa luta entre macaco e leopardo. Barry deixou os rosnados e grunhidos para mim, e eu me diverti brincando com eles. A inspiração para a cena, suponho, especialmente Thak segurando a pata molenga do leopardo morto para garantir que ele tenha realmente morrido, é a luta com o tiranossauro em King Kong.

Logo depois disso, o editor Goodman decidiu encerrar seu experimento com quadrinhos de 48 páginas e voltar às 32, agora por 20 centavos. O que talvez tenha sido bom, pois produzir um gibi de 34 páginas tinha deixado Barry e eu bem atrasados no cronograma. Eu podia inventar o que eu quisesse no papel de roteirista, mas a única coisa que nos salvou em termos artísticos foi o fato de termos uma história original do Conan de 16 páginas disponível e já basicamente acabada!

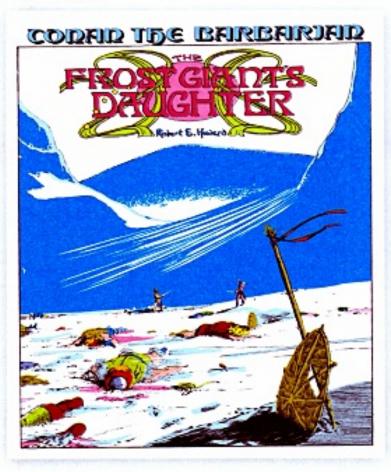
"O Habitante das Trevas" havia sido ilustrado e artefinalizado por Barry e enviado de Londres totalmente finalizado após uma conferência telefônica transatlântica, na qual escrevi diálogos e recordatórios e os colei na narrativa. A história continha um pouco de nudez que precisávamos refazer para passar pelo Comics Code (a versão original da história seria impressa posteriormente em preto e branco), mas, além disso, não tivemos muitos problemas. O monstro octópode que criamos não era a imagem mais forte que já concebemos, então eu adicionei alguns recordatórios de narração que indicavam que ele já foi humano, o que deixou tudo com um pouco mais de impacto. Alguns leitores nos criticaram porque, se Conan não exatamente mata uma mulher nesta história (o que iria contra seu próprio código de conduta, mas felizmente não contra o Código dos Quadrinhos), ele permite que o polvo a mate... e esses leitores podiam muito bem estar certos. Eu mesmo tinha minhas dúvidas, na época. Mas foi uma bela história para Conan, o Bárbaro 12.

Enquanto isso, para a nº 13, eu tinha uma noção vaga de um conto que queria fazer, mas decidi trazer mais alguém para a equação. O autor John Jakes, antes de se tornar um romancista histórico de renome, escrevia ficção científica, westerns e um pouco de tudo para revistas em prosa. Gostei do herói dele, Brak, o Bárbaro, de clara inspiração no Conan, então o convidei a tramar uma história ambientada em Yezud, a Cidade do Deus-Aranha, mencionada em uma aventura de Conan. John escreveu uma sinopse de algumas páginas, que se tornaram a base de Conan 13, "Na Teia do Deus-Aranha". Apesar de todo o sucesso que ele teve desde então, tenho orgulho de dizer que John nunca negou que escreveu histórias em quadrinhos. Na verdade, ele ainda ostenta a página inicial da edição, que eu dei a ele depois de Barry e eu dividirmos as artes originais das revistas. Ele é um cara elegante, esse John Jakes... e agora um colega que migrou para a Carolina do Sul, com quem eu me encontro ocasionalmente em eventos na Universidade da Carolina do Sul.

Para os números 14 e 15, Barry e eu decidimos ampliar ainda mais a rede de Conan — mas essa é uma história a ser contada no terceiro volume destes artigos. Quando terminou de ilustrar a nº 15, no entanto, Barry decidiu que fazer Conan simplesmente se tornara trabalho demais para ele, e sentiu que era hora de seguir em frente. No entanto, ele e eu tivemos a mesma ideia, de forma independente — fazer mais uma edição, juntos.

Como a revista P&B Savage Tales 1 da Marvel, que contou com nossa adaptação da história de Robert E. Howard "A Filha do Gigante do Gelo", teve uma distribuição muito irregular, pegamos suas 11 páginas, criamos mais uma nova página inicial e aumentamos para 12 páginas, e pronto. Quando Howard escreveu a história pela primeira vez, no início dos anos 30, ela foi rejeitada pelo editor da revista pulp Weird Tales e não havia sido publicada em forma de uma história do Conan até a década de 1960. Era um conto menor, mas bonito — que provavelmente, com algumas mudanças de escolha de palavras, devia acontecer por volta da época dos acontecimentos de Conan 1.

Meu derradeiro ajuste foi suavizar o texto em um ou outro balão, pois, sem sombra de dúvida, o que Conan pretendia fazer se alcançasse e dominasse a sedutora Atali seria estupro qualificado para qualquer juiz de bom senso.



Na segunda metade da edição 16, publicamos uma história complementar que eu e Barry havíamos produzido anos antes para um dos títulos de (quase) terror da Marvel: Starr, o Matador. E, assim, toda a obra marvelística de Barry Smith no gênero espada & magia estava reunida (ainda que ligeiramente censurada em alguns casos) nos números 1 a 16 de Conon, o Bárbaro.

E Barry se foi... por duas edições!

2003

Desde 1965, Roy Thomas trilhou uma longa e consagrada carreira no ramo das histórias em quadrinhos. Em 1999, em votação promovida por uma publicação especializada, foi eleito o quinto melhor roteirista do século 20 e o quarto editor mais enaltecido pelos leitores. Thomas já escreveu e editou revistas dos principais super-heróis da Marvel e da DC Comics, mas ele mesmo considera a transposição de Conan para os quadrinhos seu trabalho favorito e o ápice de sua carreira. THE CRONICLES OF CONAN VOL. 3: THE MONSTER OF THE MONOLITHS AND OTHER STORIES (2003).

COMPILANDO: Conan the Barbarian 14, 15, e 17 a 21.

POSFÁCIO: Roy Thomas

POR TRÁS DAS ESPADAS:

UMA JORNADA PESSOAL POR CONAN THE BARBARIAN 14-15 E 17-21. POR ROY THOMAS

Se John Jakes veio, por que não Michael Moorcock?

Essa foi a pergunta que me fiz em 1971, antes de receber o mapa de vendas dos números 1 a 7 de Conan, o Bárbaro, quando descobrimos que as primeiras sete edições sofreram queda nas vendas, uma depois da outra. Naguela época, eu estava colecionando brochuras

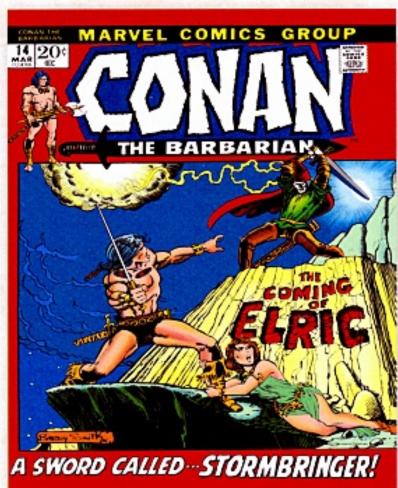
de espada & magia assim que saíam das impressoras. O

trabalho de John Jakes em livros estrelados por Brak, o Bárbaro, me atraiu porque o estilo de prosa do autor tinha, deliberadamente, a mesma sensação da prosa das histórias de Robert E. Howard, que estavam sendo reimpressas na revista pulp de 1930 Weird Tales. Brak, é claro, era praticamente um clone louro do cimério. Michael Moorcock, por sua vez, já era um nome proeminente na ficção científica, mas, por diversão e lucro, ele também escrevia histórias com seu herói Elric de Melniboné, este bem diferente do Conan. Elric, cujas aventuras estavam então sendo reimpressas nos EUA em versões parcialmente censuradas, era um albino magricela que dificilmente poderia ter levantado sua lâmina mágica negra Stormbringer se esta não tivesse um desejo consciente e meio maléfico que ele o fizesse. Tal herói e sua arma teriam sido um anátema para Conan, que temia e desprezava a magia e aqueles que a praticavam.

Mas, como eles (e Stan Lee) sempre dizem, os opostos se atraem — mesmo que apenas para se repelir.

Então, para ampliar os horizontes do Conan, da Marvel Comics e meus - não necessariamente nessa ordem – escrevi para Moorcock, que, sendo inglês, morava na Inglaterra (não que isso tenha o impedido de residir hoje nos arredores de Austin, Texas), e perguntei se ele estaria interessado em bolar a trama de uma história em que Conan encontra Elric por uma ninharia lamentável cuja quantia eu fiz o favor de esquecer. Moorcock concordou, mas quando a sinopse chegou, não só era longa e complexa demais para uma única edição de Conan, como tambem trazia a assinatura "de Michael Moorcock e Jim Cawthorn", e eu imediatamente presumi que o último, um amigo de longa data e em certo ponto colaborador do primeiro, havia desenvolvido a maior parte da trama. Entrevistas posteriores de Moorcock confirmaram minhas suspeitas, mas isso pouco importava. Era uma história de Conan e Elric, Moorcock havia lhe dado seu selo oficial, e só me restava adaptá--la a uma edição de Conan.

No fim das contas, mesmo cortando uma subtrama da qual não me lembro mais muito bem, a sinopse se tornou a base da primeira aventura em duas partes do cimério, nas edições 14 e 15. Barry Smith — que lembrava Elric muito mais do que Conan — parecia gostar de desenhar essa mescla sobrenatural convertida em quadrinhos do Conan. Infelizmente, ele — com o meu aval — seguiu o design de Elric dos livros americanos, onde, por algum motivo, ele ostentava um chapéu alto, cônico, que realmente não agradava muito Moorcock.



Ficamos tentados a remover o chapéu em reimpressões posteriores, mas isso exigiria adulteração da arte de Barry. Além disso, também significaria que toda a edição teria que ser recolorida, o que custaria dinheiro, em um era em que geralmente eram feitas reimpressões principalmente para gerar capital, não para gastá-lo.

Serei sincero com você (e por que não deveria, sem nada a perder?): Acredito que o mago na sinopse de Moorcock e Cawthorn provavelmente era um mago novo e indefinido, e que fomos eu e Barry que decidimos fazer dele Zukala, o feiticeiro que criamos em Conan 5. Se aquele mago sem nome tinha uma filha ou não, não faço ideia — mas Zukala tinha Zephra, e ela foi uma adição bem-vinda e muito humana à história.

Foi no decorrer da história que acredito que Barry anunciou que havia decidido deixar a revista do Conan. Stan lamentou vê-lo partir — eu fiquei ainda mais triste, pois naquela época eu trabalhava sob o aparente mal-entendido de que Barry e eu éramos amigos além de colaboradores — e quando Barry incluiu ideias e até diálogos próprios, cheguei a restringir meu trabalho de roteirista, só para lhe conceder uma despedida em grande estilo, como Barry queria.

Nós dois tivemos a mesma ideia exatamente ao mesmo tempo: faríamos a Marvel reimprimir nossa adaptação da história de "A Filha do Gigante de Gelo" e nosso herói proto-Conan "Starr, o Matador" na edição 16, então todos os nossos trabalhos relacionados ao Conan estariam reunidos nessas dezesseis edições. Mas essa história, e a história por trás da história, foram ambas contadas da última vez... Então, o que me preocupava naquele momento era: para onde vamos daqui?

Quando chegaram os relatórios iniciais de vendas da Conan nº 7, eu estava em casa escrevendo. Em 1971, Stan Lee ainda era "apenas" editor-chefe da Marvel, não seu editor, mas teve uma ideia. Com Conan, o Bárbaro, aparentemente em queda livre, ele cancelaria a revista e trocaria Barry para alguma revista de super-herói, onde o jovem britânico poderia ser mais lucrativamente utilizado. É claro que, até então, Barry não desejava desenhar super-heróis, mas Stan não sabia disso. Portanto, embora eu não tenha certeza dos trâmites exatos, ele cancelou Conan.

Eu entrei no escritório na manhã seguinte, soube do cancelamento e fiquei enfurecido, algo que eu não costumava fazer com meu mentor naqueles dias. Era o editor Martin Goodman quem decidia se os livros deveriam ser cancelados ou não, argumentei, e Goodman apenas seguiu o capricho de Stan, não foi ele quem deu a ideia. Se Stan quisesse tirar Barry à força de Conan, eu disse, tudo bem — ele podia ir em frente e eu encontraria outro artista. Mas Stan não deveria ter cancelado o gibi só como desculpa esfarrapada para garantir a arte de Barry Smith nos quadrinhos de super-heróis!

Talvez devido à minha defesa tão passional, Stan aceitou meus argumentos em vez de me atirar da janela mais próxima (por sorte, eram todas lacradas), e eis que Conan, o Bárbaro, foi recolocado no cronograma, embora novamente bimestral, mesmo tendo se tornado mensal algum tempo antes. A primeira edição bimestral nova, no fim das contas, foi Conan 14, o início da história de Elric. Ótimo, eu pensei, isso me dava mais tempo para escrever meus amados super-heróis como Os Vingadores, Namor, O Incrivel Hulk, etc. - e Barry. cuja crescente atenção aos detalhes tornara cada edição mais difícil do que a anterior, teria um pouco mais de tempo para desenhar magistralmente cada ramo e cada folha das infindáveis árvores que proliferavam nas aventuras do Conan! Em suma, estávamos de volta ao chamado cenário em que ninguém sairia perdendo.

Por mais que eu tente, não consigo lembrar por que acabei recrutando Gil Kane para assumir a arte, e não John Buscema. Talvez Stan tivesse outros trabalhos para John fazer naquele momento. De qualquer forma, eu sabia que Gil queria ardorosamente ilustrar o Conan, pois o adorava a ponto de ter até acalentado a esperança de

produzir e publicar de maneira independente um gibi em preto e branco do personagem. Pensei que ele merecia uma chance — e, além disso, éramos ótimos amigos desde que, anos antes, trabalhamos juntos na revitalização do Capitão Marvel. Sempre que possível, procurávamos repetir nossa parceria, por isso imaginei que ele merecia aquela chance. Assim, Gil Kane se tornou o segundo desenhista de Conan, o Bárbaro — com a intenção, de ambas as partes, de que ele o faria "para sempre".

A passagem de Gil durou duas edições.

Até onde me lembro, quando Gil e eu nos sentamos para discutir a melhor forma de lançar nossa colaboração nesse herói que nós dois amamos (ele por muito mais tempo do que eu), ele sugeriu que, já que eu estava adaptando histórias não-Conan de Robert E. Howard em HQs do Conan, da mesma forma que o autor de fantasia L. Sprague de Camp fazia em prosa, ele tinha um conto em particular que gostaria de desenhar como uma aventura de Conan. "Os Deuses de Bal-Sagoth" tinha sido uma aventura quase de espada & magia do herói irlandês Black Turlogh O'Brien, de Rober E. Howard, um que se passava em cerca de 1000 d.C., que tinha sido publicado pela primeira vez na edição de outubro de 1931 da revista Weird Tales, e tinha sido reimpresso pelo menos três vezes desde então, em capa dura ou brochura. Entrei em contato com Glenn Lord, agente literário de REH, e foi concedida permissão para adaptar "Deuses" em Conan. Tornou-se a segunda história em duas partes da revista.

Gil e eu nos divertimos muito. O capitão pirata de Turlogh, Wulfhere, tornou-se Fafnir – um personagem que Barry e eu havíamos apresentado na edição 6. Gil fez um trabalho maravilhoso, e pode ter sido ele quem sugeriu chamar o jovem Ralph Reese, que já foi assistente do grande Wally Wood, como colorista. Como Gil sempre adorou ser colorizado por Wally, ele achou que isso seria bom o suficiente. Por acaso, Ralph seguiu uma abordagem bem diferente da de Woody, mas, no fim, ficamos ainda mais felizes com seu trabalho em Conan Foi um verdadeiro tour de force, do começo ao fim. Infelizmente, Ralph teve problemas para cumprir o prazo e não quis mais continuar no livro. Assim, para a nº 18, outro ex-aluno de Wood, Dan Adkins, foi chamado a bordo, e o resultado foi uma história em duas partes que, em minha opinião, é um dos melhores trabalhos que Barry já fez no título, embora em um estilo decididamente diferente.

Enquanto isso, surpreendentemente, quando chegavam os relatórios de vendas de Conan 8 e além, a revista havia virado a mesa após o número 7, e tinha voltado a ser mensal a partir do número 16. Nunca deixaria de ser ao menos mensal em toda sua vida na Marvel.

Um dos fatores que mais estimula as vendas de cada edição de um periódico é sempre a capa e, nesse quesito, os números 17 e 18 de CB foram privilegiados, pois o próprio Gil Kane ilustrou ótimas capas. O jovem Frank Brunner, que acabara de iniciar uma carreira estelar, se ofereceu para arte-finalizar a primeira, e fez isso esplendidamente. Quando Gil terminou de desenhar a da edição 18, ela foi entregue a John Romita para fazer a arte-final. Como se viu - e me perdoem se bato demais na tecla das vendas aqui, mas se Conan não tivesse vendo, não teria tido seu quase quarto de século de glórias nos quadrinhos — as duas edições desenhadas (mais as capas) por Gil Kane superaram até as mais recentes de Barry, embora as de Barry também estivessem ganhando força. Em particular, a nº 18, com Romita arte-finalizando Kane, tornou-se facilmente a edição mais vendida por um bom tempo. Bem, isso não foi surpreendente. Quando John assumiu Demolidor logo após as edições de Wally Wood em 1965, tornou-se quase imediatamente um dos títulos mais vendidos da Marvel proporcionalmente, embora com uma tiragem menor do que algumas outras revistas. E quando Stan contratou John para assumir as rédeas artísticas de O Espetacular Homem-Aranha depois que Steve Ditko partiu, demorou apenas alguns meses para que a revista passasse Quarteto Fantástico como o quadrinho mais vendido da empresa. Romita tinha um toque de Midas no final da década de 1960 e durante toda a década de 1970. Colocá-lo em um título era como colocar dinheiro no banco.

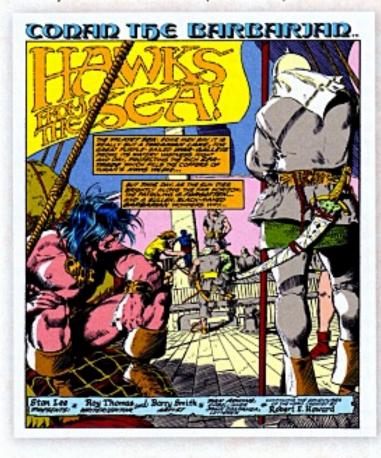
Mas nem tudo estava bem com o Conan de Gil Kane. A despeito de todo o seu amor pelo personagem, Gil Kane tinha outras preocupações, sendo a principal delas de caráter financeiro. De repente, ele percebeu que uma publicação com o nível de exigência artística de Conan ocuparia a maior parte de seu tempo, impedindo-o de produzir o volume de trabalho que assegurava a renda mensal necessária à sua vida. Mesmo assim, ele não podia caprichar "menos" para cumprir prazos. Ou ele se jogava nele de corpo e alma, ou desistia completamente. Ele chegou a reclamar com alguém na época (que me relatou devidamente): "Roy quer que eu desenhe um maldito épico a cada edição!"

Bem, claro que sim! Barry havia feito isso — e os leitores de Conan não esperavam menos! Estávamos na crista da onda — e, admito, é mais fácil para o roteirista continuar de pé na prancha que pro artista. E, relutantemente, Gil anunciou que teria que sair do título depois de apenas duas edições.

O substituto dele foi... Barry Smith!

Não me lembro exatamente o que Barry estava fazendo durante as semanas em que Gil e eu estávamos produzindo Conan 17-18. Mas praticamente ao mesmo tempo em que Gil me disse que estava saindo, Barry perguntou se poderia voltar. Ele foi, naturalmente, recebido de braços abertos. (John Buscema estaria disponível para intervir se Barry não tivesse voltado? Não sei — mas com certeza eu tentarial)

Gil e eu levamos Conan e Fafnir, perdidos em altomar, a serem resgatados por Yezdigerd, o príncipe do belicoso reino de Turan. Em troca de sua salvação, ambos foram obrigados a se engajar no exército turaniano. Partindo desse ponto, eu e Barry resolvemos criar nossa primeira epopeia em vários capítulos desenvolvendo uma ideia formulada, creio eu, na minha mente: o conceito de uma grande guerra na costa leste do Mar Vilayet, no longínquo território hirkaniano que Yezdigerd sonhava conquistar para o império de seu pai. Eu posso ter ficado só no "banco de reservas" na época do conflito do Vietnã (tipo assim: "No dia em que os comunas invadirem Nebraska, eu estarei lá pra rechaçá-los!"), mas sou apaixonado por épicos de guerra desde a minha infância, quando li a primeira adaptação em quadrinhos de A Ilíada, a qual me remeteu ao lindo poema original. Esse clássico inspirou algumas das minhas principais criações, como a Guerro Kree-Skrull no gibi dos Vingadores e minhas séries situadas na 2ª Guerra Mundial: Os Invasores (na Marvel) e Comando Invencível (DC Comics).



Barry, por razões próprias, era simpático aos meus anseios, e começou a desenhar e bolar várias ideias malucas para seu retorno, começando em Conan 19. Nem todas as coisas que ele queria fazer eram coisas que eu pensei que Robert E. Howard teria feito com seu guerreiro cimério, mas elas sempre me atraíam. Afinal, essa era uma história em quadrinhos de Conan, o Conan da Marvel, Conan de Thomas e Smith, e algumas concessões para nossa própria criatividade tinham que ser feitas. Se Barry quisesse fazer algo de uma certa maneira, eu precisaria de um bom motivo para dizer não e arriscar diminuir o entusiasmo dele.

Eu acreditava (e até hoje acredito) que um bom editor deveria trabalhar desse modo, (É claro que Stan ainda poderia me contrariar quando quisesse, mas ele estava cada vez menos disposto a fazê-lo.) Então, se Barry queria que Conan virasse a cabeça e uma lança

cortasse seu nariz no painel 19, tudo bem por mim. Se Barry desenhasse o bárbaro assistindo uma gaivota e contemplando os mistérios do destino, que seja, eu me juntaria aos seus arroubos de fantasia e sugeriria possíveis diálogos ou legendas. Barry ilustrou uma sequência de imagens cercadas de espaços vazios que eu poderia preencher com prosa em vez de textos em balões ou recordatórios, aceitei prontamente o desafio - como eu tinha feito quando Neal Adams me apresentou uma proposta semelhante no gibi dos X-Men. Se Barry havia decidido que Fafnir deveria ser torturado com a amputação de um braço, depois jogado ao mar pelo comandante das hordas turanianas, eu é que não faria nenhuma objeção. Afinal, nós precisávamos mesmo de uma boa justificativa para o Cimério matar Balthaz (um coadjuvante, aliás, criado só com essa finalidade)! Esse seria o motivo perfeito para Conan se voltar contra os turanianos, e eu tinha planejado que ele vivenciaria os dois lados daquele conflito que ficou conhecido como a Guerra Hirkaniana ou a Guerra de Makkalet.

A única nuvem negra no horizonte eram os onipresentes prazos mensais. Barry se esforçou tanto no número 19 que não teríamos tempo para Dan Adkins colorizar tudo, então Barry reforçou o desenho no grafite e esperamos pelo melhor. Infelizmente, dada a qualidade inferior das impressões em quadrinhos da época, o resultado não foi totalmente satisfatório. Hoje, talvez essas amostras da arte intocada de Barry Smith tenham ganhado ares de "atração especial", e entendo que devam ser republicadas para sempre nas mesmas condições.

Mesmo assim, "Gaviões do Mar" ficou uma beleza — e "O Cão Negro da Vingança" mais ainda. Nunca antes, em uma história em quadrinhos, eu havia sentido o oceano batendo nas laterais das galés, como na página inicial de Conan 21, apresentada por Smith e Adkins! E o salão de espelhos na edição 20 mostrou que Barry não apenas tinha ótimas ideias — pelo menos, presumo que os espelhos tenham sido na sua maioria ou totalmente



ideia dele, não minha — mas que ele estava disposto a dedicar tempo e esforço para pensar em todos aqueles reflexos de reflexos - e depois se sentar e desenhá--los. Ele não fugia do trabalho, nosso Barry, não senhor! Depois de tudo isso, Conan 21, "O Monstro dos Monólitos", foi meio que um pouco de água fria. A narrativa começava esplendorosa, com o Cimério emergindo das águas que banhavam o ancoradouro e os degraus inferiores da escadaria de Makkalet, a cidade sitiada. E Dan Adkins arte-finalizou as primeiras páginas de maneira soberba. Mas então, por motivos pessoais, Dan diminuiu o ritmo e logo anunciou que não poderia terminar a edição, o que nos deixou em um dilema — e, como sempre, com o prazo apertado. Craig Russell, Val Mayerik e Sal Buscema dividiram as últimas páginas, e o resultado, mesmo que profissional, carecia do brilho do trabalho de Adkins. Após a experiência com a nº 19, no entanto, eu não ousaria abordar Stan com a ideia de imprimir a nº 21 no lápis!

Ainda assim, a história — baseada em parte em uma de Howard — ficou razoável e sustentou o panorama épico da Guerra Hirkaniana. Tudo continuava bem (temporariamente) em nosso mundo hiboriano, sobre o qual começavam a se projetar as sombras tanto do já insinuado Abutre quanto de uma linda guerreira ruiva chamada... Sonja.

E o melhor: Barry Smith estava mesmo de volta para ficar... por mais duas histórias completas!

2003

Desde 1965, Roy Thomas trilhou uma longa e consagrada carreira no ramo das histórias em quadrinhos. Em 1999, em votação promovida por uma publicação especializada, foi eleito o quinto melhor roteirista do século 20 e o quarto editor mais enaltecido pelos leitores. Thomas já escreveu e editou revistas dos principais super-heróis da Marvel e da DC Comics, mas considera a transposição de Conan para os quadrinhos seu trabalho favorito e o ápice de sua carreira. Embora acredite que as aventuras criadas por ele, Smith, Kane e Buscema superam todos os filmes do Cimério já produzidos, Roy tem a convicção de que o Conan de Robert E. Howard será sempre o único que realmente importa.

Roy Thomas reside com sua esposa Dann em uma bela fazenda na Carolina do Sul. A propriedade é repleta de animais de estimação, dentre eles o pastor alemão Calhoun (vulgo Zula) que, às vezes, ostenta uma intrigante e suspeita semelhança com o Cão Negro da Vingança. THE CRONICLES OF CONAN VOL. 4: THE SONG OF RED SONJA AND OTHER STORIES (MAIO DE 2004).

compilando: Conan the Barbarian 23 a 26, e Savage Tales 2 e 3

introdução: Roy Thomas

CABELOS E PREGOS VERMELHOS

ROY THOMAS RELEMBRA A HISTÓRIA POR TRÁS DAS HISTÓRIAS REUNIDAS NESTA SUPEREDIÇÃO.

Em um mundo perfeito, este quarto volume de The Chronicles of Conan começaria com a história que apareceu em Conan The Barbarian 22, não na 23. Mas, neste mundo, isso significaria simplesmente que a Dark Horse teria reimpresso Conan 1 novamente, pois a 22ª edição da encarnação da Marvel do robusto cimério foi... uma reimpressão.

Simplesmente não deu tempo.

Apesar de sua crescente insatisfação em relação ao jeito da Marvel de fazer as coisas (o que incluía horários, escalas de pagamento... quase tudo, suspeito), Barry sempre foi completamente profissional durante nossos vários anos juntos, adaptando a criação bárbara de Robert E. Howard. No entanto, a quantidade cada vez maior de trabalho que ele colocava em cada edição cobrava seu preço. Os meses não se estendiam e os horários não se alongavam apenas porque um artista decidiu renderizar seus painéis com cada vez mais detalhes e cuidados. Para Barry, na verdade, provavelmente parecia que o prazo entre as edições estava constantemente mais curto. Ele deve ter ansiado pelos dias em que Conan The Barbarian mancava bimestralmente, antes que as vendas melhores induzissem o editor Martin Goodman – sem consultar o artista atormentado, nem o escritor/editor associado (eu), ou até o editor Stan Lee — a tornar novamente a revista mensal no nº 16.

Até hoje, não me lembro exatamente por que a história da edição nº 22 estava tão atrasada para precisarmos recorrer à reimpressão. Basta dizer que, embora a capa fosse de Barry, ela não se encaixava com o conteúdo interno, então vou pular para a história em si.

O conto de Robert E. Howard, intitulado "A Sombra do Abutre", não era uma façanha de Conan, nem era uma história de espada & magia. Ele foi visto pela primeira vez na revista pulp The Magic Carpet, de janeiro de 1934. Seu herói era um cavaleiro alemão "beberrão e briguento" chamado Gottfried von Kalmbach, que estava em Viena em 1529, quando Süleyman, o Magnífico e seus turcos sitiaram a cidade. O conto dizia respeito "aos esforços de Süleyman para obter a cabeça de Gottfried por conta de um ferimento causado por ele em uma batalha alguns anos antes".

Até então, Barry e eu tínhamos experiência em transformar argumentos do REH que não eram do Conan em histórias do cimério. Não seria difícil transmutar Von Kalmbach em Conan... e o príncipe Yezdigerd de Turan, com uma cicatriz facial permanente causada pelo cimério no final de "O Cão Negro da Vingança", foi feito sob medida para entrar na pele fictícia de Süleyman. Mas essa não é a principal razão pela qual eu estava tão entusiasmado em adaptar a história para os quadrinhos.

O motivo era a Red Sonya de Rogatino.

Fazia tempo que eu queria colocar uma guerreira na vida do jovem Conan... um equivalente às piratas Bélit e Valeria, as quais ele conheceria nos próximos anos. Eu até sabia que cor eu queria que o cabelo da nova camarada tivesse. Bélit tinha cabelos negros e Valéria era loira... então a nova mulher deveria ser uma ruiva.

Eu gostaria de poder dizer que estava tão familiarizado com o trabalho não-Conan de Robert E. Howard que
pensei instantaneamente em "Sombra", talvez até que eu
possuísse uma cópia dessa edição da Magic Carpet. A verdade, no entanto, é que um entusiasta da prosa de Conan
chamado Allan Howard — sem relação com Robert E., até
onde sei — me levou a isso. Em 1969, o escritor de ficção
científica/fantasia L. Sprague de Camp, já veterano em
escrever contos com o cimério de REH, havia editado The
Conan Swordbook, uma coleção de artigos sobre ficção de
espada & magia nas páginas do lendário fanzine Amra.

Um dos artigos reimpressos naquela publicação, que eu havia comprado para pesquisa e inspiração, era "Conan on Crusade" ("Conan nas Cruzadas"), de Allan Howard, que tratava da ficção de REH ambientada durante o período das Cruzadas ou um pouco mais tarde. Nele, ele dedicou precisamente um parágrafo a "Sombra do Abutre", mas isso foi suficiente, pois terminava com as seguintes frases:

"Von Kalmbach, alternadamente e, às vezes, simultaneamente, se diverte e briga magnificamente em companhia de uma beldade russa ruiva que teria sido uma boa



companheira para Conan. Na verdade, ela poderia ser um pouco demais para ele."

Fiquei instantaneamente intrigado. Essa personagem
— cujo nome não foi mencionado por Allan Howard, por
algum motivo — parecia estar implorando para ser trazida
para o cânone de Conan. Então rapidamente entrei em
contato com Glenn Lord, agente literário do espólio de
REH, que me enviou fotocópias de "Sombra".

Vi que o nome dessa personagem coadjuvante era Red Sonya de Rogatino, e que na história ela era a irmã gêmea guerreira de Sophia, uma figura histórica real na época do cerco, que foi amante do próprio Süleyman, se bem me lembro. Eu amei a história, amei a personagem e amei o nome.

Então, eu mudei o nome.

Senti que a nova camarada de Conan e, por vezes, parceira de treino não deveria ser 100% a mesma que apareceu em "Sombra". Então, mudei a ortografia do nome dela de "Sonya" para "Sonja". E foi como Red Sonja que ela alcançou sua própria imortalidade... ou, pelo menos, algo próximo de três décadas dela, até agora.

Barry, eu me lembro, ficou entusiasmado com a história e com Red Sonya/Sonja, e tocou a bola. Parte da história de Howard foi descartada — a irmã gêmea na cidade sitiada (agora Makkalet), por exemplo — embora eu tenha mantido intacto o nome do vilão Mikhal Oglu o Abutre do título. O que Conan e Red Sonja fazem, no entanto, é aproximadamente 99% idêntico ao que aconteceu entre Von Kalmbach e Sonya no conto original em prosa. A contribuição de Barry foi desenhá-la de uma maneira que a fizesse parecer tanto forte quanto atraente. Ele a vestiu com uma camisa de malha e o equivalente hiboriano do que era chamado, na gíria do início da década de 1970, de "hot pants". Talvez fosse um jeito de vestir moderno demais para uma guerreira, mas ninguém reclamou. (Eu não gostava muito do fato de Barry fazer Conan arremessar sua caneca de cerveja em um cachorro que latia, mas a caneca não foi mostrada realmente atingindo o cachorro, então deixei passar.)

E assim, acreditamos que "A Sombra do Abutre" se tornou um das melhores edições de Conan The Barbarian de Roy Thomas e Barry Smith até hoje.

Com exceção de uma página na edição que Barry sequer tocou.

Quando recebi seu primeiro lote de desenhos, sua apresentação de Mikhal Oglu era um painel em plano médio dele conversando com o príncipe Yezdigerd, no que agora é a página 6 de "Sombra". Achei que era uma introdução pouco dramática para o Abutre, então sentei e escrevi uma nova página 5 com seis painéis, que vinha antes daquela que Barry havia feito. Enviei essa página de roteiro com o restante das páginas para o arte-finalista Sal Buscema, que também é um bom desenhista... ele desenhou e finalizou... e o resultado foi a única página de qualquer uma das edições de Conan nas quais Barry trabalhou em que ele não pôs a mão.

Mas então, Barry decidiu deixar Conon The Barbarian – pela segunda vez – depois da edição 24. Simpático a pelo menos algumas de suas razões para fazê-lo, trabalhei com ele para fazer todo o possível e tornar essa nova edição final de Smith em um destaque. "A Canção da Guerreira Sonja", graças em grande parte aos esforços de Barry, tornou-se uma das mais lembradas edições de todas as que estivemos juntos. E tenho orgulho em dizer que é uma Thomas/Smith totalmente original. Barry até coloriu a edição.

Foi uma brincadeira, com mais símbolos fálicos na segunda metade da história do que você poderia conseguir ao agitar um frasco de Viagra. No início da história, o Comics Code nos obrigou a mudar várias coisas na sexta página, de modo a fazer Sonja segurar sua blusa de malha (em vez de apenas as mãos) para esconder seu topless... e as mãos de Conan no painel 3, que na versão original a lápis desaparecia debaixo d'água, teve que ser trazida para envolver sua cintura. Estou surpreso que eles não tenham feito Barry também redesenhar grande parte do painel 5. Mas o que eles achavam que estava acontecendo para causar a explosão na água?



Na verdade, fico ainda mais surpreso por ter caído em uma "piada" de Barry na página 3. Ele me pediu para que um personagem do painel 4 chamasse outro de "wank" [no texto original]. Naquela época, essa gíria britânica para masturbação (ou alguém que se masturba) não era de conhecimento comum nos Estados Unidos, e eu certamente não sabia disso. Ainda assim, suspeitei o suficiente para pedir a Barry que me garantisse que não haveria problema em ser um palavrão na Inglaterra. Ele insistiu que não era. Fui na dele e logo (de uma carta postada do Reino Unido) descobri o que tinha acontecido. Fiquei chateado

com Barry por mentir para mim, é claro, e depois desse dia, se ele me dissesse que o céu estava azul, eu abriria a janela para conferir.

Mas eu tinha coisas mais importantes em mente naquele momento. Eu estava passando pela primeira das duas ou três separações de minha primeira esposa Jean depois de quatro anos de casamento, e foi particularmente doloroso escrever a prosa agridoce necessária no espaço que Barry deixou na página da décima terceira história.

E, com o número 24, Barry se foi... de novo.



Seu substituto foi "Big John" Buscema, que nos últimos anos havia se tornado um dos principais artistas da Marvel. Como mencionado no primeiro volume desta série, John foi escolhido para ser o artista original de Conan The Barbarian, até que as práticas penosas de nossa editora nos forçaram a procurar um artista mais barato, o que deu a Barry a oportunidade de brilhar.

Até agora, o quadrinho vendia moderadamente bem; além disso, a Marvel havia sido vendida para um conglomerado, Stan Lee havia se tornado publisher e agora eu era editor-chefe. Chega de tentar recuperar os 200 dólares por edição que estávamos pagando ao espólio de Robert E. Howard! John estava a bordo.

Ele solicitou que o arte-finalista fosse seu irmão Sal, que embelezava seus lápis mais ao jeito que ele queria do que a maioria das pessoas (além de si mesmo), e Stan e eu ficamos felizes em aceitar. O trabalho de John em Conan carece da intensidade obstinada e quase obsessiva de Barry — John não ficaria debruçado sobre uma única página por um dia inteiro ou mais —, mas seu desenho era quase perfeito e suas narrativas eram boas à sua maneira, como as de Barry.

Em algum momento inicial, Stan me chamou e me perguntou o que eu achava que aconteceria com Conan The Barbarian sem Barry como artista.

Respondi sem hesitar: "Acho que ganharemos menos prêmios e venderemos mais histórias em quadrinhos".

Não foi ataque ao Barry, Stan sabia. Ele e eu teríamos ficado felizes em ter Barry desenhando Conan até o Universo acabar (ou a Era Hiboriana, o que viesse primeiro) e as vendas da revista já estavam muito boas. Mas achei que a abordagem mais convencional de John provavelmente se mostraria mais comercial. E (embora nem sempre) eu estava certo nessa época, já que, nos dois anos seguintes, Conan The Barbarian cresceria até se tornar uma das revistas com melhores vendas da Marvel. Quando uma empresa, em meados da década de 1970, quis destacar três dos principais "medalhões", escolheu o Homem-Aranha, o Incrível Hulk e Conan, o Bárbaro.

Idealmente, eu gueria completar o arco da história ao qual me referia alternadamente "A Guerra Hirkaniana" ou "A Guerra de Makkalet" com Barry. Mas, como não era para ser assim, ainda conseguimos terminar em alto nível. Após uma edição, Sal Buscema deixou a arte-final (provavelmente por conta da pressão de outros trabalhos) e foi substituído por Ernie Chan, que usava na época o sobrenome Chua. John particularmente não gostava da maneira como Ernie finalizava seus desenhos, mas Ernie estava fazendo basicamente o que Stan e eu gueríamos que ele fizesse. Ele estava adicionando detalhes aos lápis relativamente esparsos e simples de John, esperando que eles apelassem tanto para aqueles que gostaram do trabalho de John em Os Vingadores, Surfista Prateado, etc. quanto para aqueles que se divertiam com os detalhes que Barry colocava em seus últimos Conan. O resultado não era uma tentativa de imitar o trabalho de Barry ou de enterrar o de John, mas de vender histórias em quadrinhos. E funcionou. E, francamente, sempre gostei muito mais da finalização de Ernie no John mais do que o próprio John.

Fiquei feliz também com o final da uma saga de múltiplas edições, na qual o vaidoso Tarim mostrava ser um deficiente mental, um peão quase sem cérebro pelo qual dois lados haviam brigado e por quem homens haviam morrido. E, quando o colega escritor Archie Goodwin me parabenizou pelo painel final da história e sua declaração sobre a guerra, e talvez sobre a influência da religião nas muitas guerras da humanidade, eu não teria ficado mais satisfeito se Buscema, Smith ou Picasso tivessem desenhado a edição.

Mesmo assim, Barry, eu sabia, ainda não havia terminado sua relação com Conan. Tínhamos concordado, no dia em que ele anunciou sua decisão de deixar o título novamente, que trabalharíamos juntos em uma história do Conan para o renascimento de Savage Tales, a revista em preto-e-branco e sem o Code que Martin Goodman havia cancelado após uma edição.

Não apenas não haveria um código a seguir, mas também não haveria uma extensão arbitrária da história. Poderíamos deixar nossa história seguir seu próprio ritmo, mesmo que isso significasse serializá-la em mais de uma edição. O conto de Robert E. Howard que decidimos adaptar — talvez instigado por Barry — foi "Pregos Vermelhos", uma noveleta com muito pouca feitiçaria, mas uma boa quantidade de sexo e violência. Barry e eu conversamos sobre a história, mas basicamente confiei em seus instintos e deixei que ele controlasse o ritmo, o que o deixou muito satisfeito. Ele sabia que poderia falar comigo a qualquer momento se tivesse alguma pergunta ou se quisesse conversar sobre a história... e, até onde eu sabia, talvez ele o fizesse.

Inevitavelmente, porém, houve problemas. Uma questão menor foi de que ainda havia dúvidas sobre quando sairia a Savage Tales. Por isso, embora o índice da edição 2 afirmasse que ela era trimestral, na verdade havia quatro meses, e não três, entre as edições.

Além disso, até as revistas em preto-e-branco têm prazos, e a quantidade de trabalho que Barry tinha, tanto em desenho quanto em arte-final, seria capaz de exaurir um iaque. À medida que o prazo final se aproximava, lembro-me de que ele terminou essa parte da história da segunda edição um pouco antes do que pretendia, embora eu basicamente tivesse transformado a Savage Tales em uma revista de espada & magia, cortando o Homem-Coisa, Ka-Zar e outros materiais que haviam aparecido na primeira edição. Além disso, nas últimas três páginas da primeira parte, Barry só conseguiu fazer o lápis — alguns deles bem rascunhados — e pedimos ao artista Pablo Marcos para finalizá-los. Pablo fez um trabalho admirável e poucas pessoas perceberam.

Um momento tenso aconteceu quando mostrei a Stan Lee, que estava no comando da empresa, o primeiro segmento concluído. Ele não ficou muito satisfeito com o fato de que, nas páginas 2 e 3, Valeria não fazer nada além de andar a cavalo lentamente até um lago, desmontar, olhar em volta, escalar um pequeno afloramento e olhar em volta até que ela desça para encontrar Conan. É verdade, havia um esqueleto incrustado de folhas no topo do afloramento, mas essa sequência de duas páginas era muito calma para o gosto do Stan. Eu admiti que provavelmente não teria feito dessa maneira, mas insisti que essa era a história de Robert E. Howard e concordei com Barry de que deveríamos adaptá-la fielmente. Stan apenas balançou a cabeça; havia muito trabalho a fazer nas páginas e muito pouco tempo para mudá-las, mas...

(Interessante que, embora tivéssemos os problemas de prazo mencionados acima, Barry ainda havia escrito sua própria adaptação pictórica de um poema de Robert E. Howard, "Cimmeria", que era periférico a Conan. Não tenho ideia de como ele conseguiu fazer isso... mas foi ótimo, apesar de eu estar chateado por ele ter decidido mudar algumas palavras no poema. Se não fosse pela dificuldade de igualar as letras que Barry usou, eu provavelmente teria insistido em mudá-las. Mas existem limites.)

O período de quatro meses entre a segunda e a terceira edição de Savage Tales foi provavelmente uma dádiva de Deus (ou Crom?), porque, caso contrário, duvido que Barry teria sido capaz de concluir a arte de "Pregos Vermelhos" a tempo para todos que trabalhavam na edição, e poderia ser necessário passar a história para o próximo número. Incidentalmente, houve uma sequência da minha reuniãozinha com Stan, na qual ele se opôs à abertura silenciosa do primeiro capítulo. Quando chegaram os números de vendas da Savage Tales 2, eles foram muito bons... e eu não pude resistir em mencionar a Stan que o começo calmo de "Pregos Vermelhos" aparentemente não nos prejudicou. Ele apenas fez uma careta: "Se o começo tivesse sido emocionante, provavelmente teria vendido ainda melhor." Decidi que não podia argumentar com uma lógica dessas (e não era estúpido o suficiente para tentar) e deixei o assunto de lado. Além disso, Stan sempre foi um apoiador de Barry e eu em Conan The Barbarian e isso era o que importava.

Eu não disse nada sobre a arte de Barry em "Pregos Vermelhos" porque o espaço é curto — além disso, a arte poderosa e requintada fala por si. Quando Barry faz um piso de ladrilhos quadrados nas páginas seguintes, ele nunca deixa de desenhá-los... e a perspectiva do piso aumenta a sensação de espaço e a realidade da violenta ação. Quando as pessoas morrem e seus corpos são arrastados pelo chão, deixam rastros de sangue que podem ser pretos e não vermelhos, mas que, no entanto, dão uma sensação muito real da carnificina que aconteceu.

A adaptação em quadrinhos de "Pregos Vermelhos" foi uma obra-prima e fiquei feliz em vê-la reimpressa duas vezes (em cores) pela Marvel nos anos seguintes. Fiquei igualmente satisfeito e orgulhoso de vê-la impressa novamente nesta edição da Dark Horse, como um legado duradouro dos primeiros e importantes tempos de Conan The Barbarian e Savage Tales, como um dos trabalhos de quadrinhos mais influentes realizados nos anos 1970.

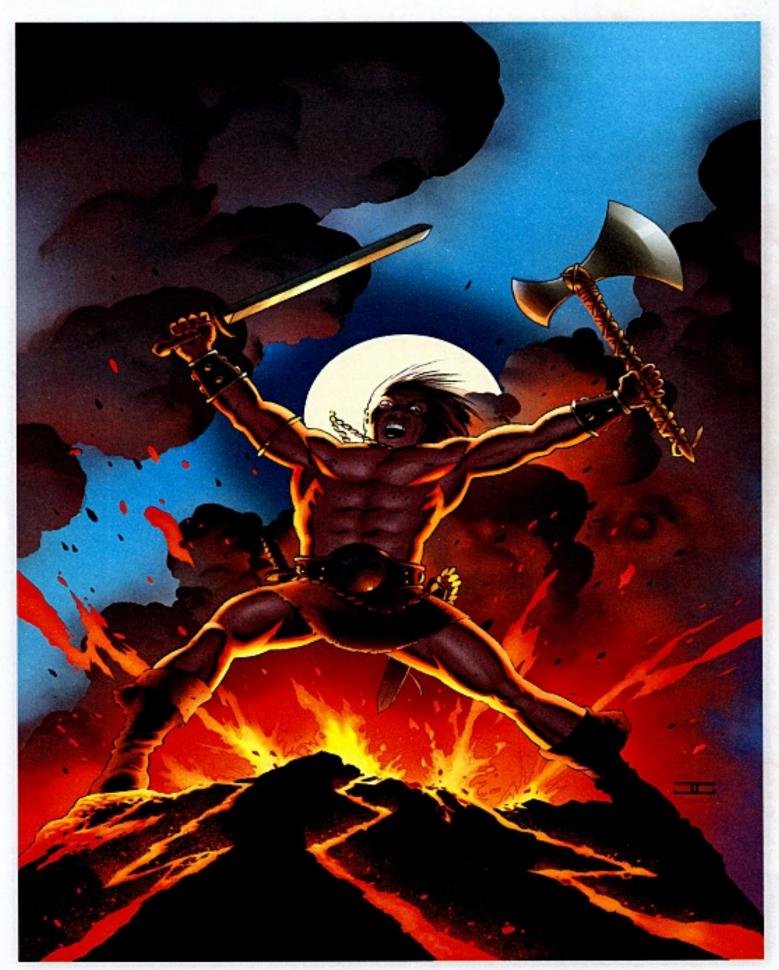
Estou feliz por ter feito parte disso... e, embora o maior sucesso comercial da revista aconteça apenas um ou dois anos depois, sempre ficarei feliz em saber que Barry Smith teve a chance de desenhar Conan e provou que nunca foi ou será a segunda escolha de alguém nesse título novamente!

2003

Desde 1965, Roy Thomas trilhou uma longa e consagrada carreira no ramo das histórias em quadrinhos. Em 1999, em votação promovida por uma publicação especializada, foi eleito o quinto melhor roteirista do século 20 e o quarto editor mais enaltecido pelos leitores. Thomas já escreveu e editou revistas dos principais super-heróis da Marvel e da DC Comics, mas considera a transposição de Conan para os quadrinhos seu trabalho favorito e o ápice de sua carreira. Embora acredite que as aventuras criadas por ele, Barry Windsor-Smith, Gil Kane e John Buscema superam todos os filmes do Cimério já produzidos, Roy tem a convicção de que o Conan de Robert E. Howard será sempre o único que realmente importa.

Roy Thomas reside com sua esposa Dan em uma bela fazenda na Carolina do Sul. A propriedade é repleta de animais de estimação, incluindo cães que jamais foram ou serão alvos de copos de cerveja.

CONAN THE BARBARIAN: THE ORIGINAL MARVEL YEARS OMNIBUS VOL. 1 (JANEIRO DE 2019), CAPA Arte de John Cassaday e Laura Martin.









OS AUTORES

ROY THOMAS se juntou à Marvel como escritor e editor sob a tutela de Stan Lee, roteirizando fases-chave de quase todos os títulos: O Espetacular Homem-Aranha, Os Vingadores, Demolidor, Dr. Estranho, Namor, Thor, Os X-Men e muito mais. Ele escreveu os primeiros dez anos de Conan, o Bárbaro e A Espada Selvagem de Conan, e lançou os Defensores, Punho de Ferro, Os Invasores e Warlock. Na DC, desenvolveu All-Star Squadron, Infinity Inc. e títulos relacionados, provando ser fundamental para reviver a Sociedade da Justiça da América da Era de Ouro. Ele corroteirizou os filmes de espada & magia Fire and Ice e Conan, o Destruidor. Ao mesmo tempo, Thomas editou a premiada revista Alter Ego, contribuindo com entusiasmo para a pesquisa e a história da mídia.

Um expatriado britânico, BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH conquistou os quadrinhos americanos no final dos anos 1960, e seu estilo lírico transformou o meio. Após os esforços iniciais em X-Men, Demolidor e Nick Fury, Agente da SHIELD, foi a fase de Windsor-Smith em Conan, o Bárbaro que lhe deu a plataforma para mostrar seu talento prodigioso. Ele também entregou um trabalho memorável desenhando Os Vingadores e Doutor Estranho, após os quais abriu seu próprio estúdio. The Gorblimey Press, produzindo histórias originais e prints. Windsor-Smith retornou à Marvel nos anos 1980 e 90 em Homem-Máquina e em várias histórias dos X-Men, incluindo Morte em Vida e o conto que definiu o personagem do Wolverine, Arma X. Ele também ajudou a lançar o universo da Valiant Comics, que incluiu sua criação Archer & Armstrong, e rompeu fronteiras com sua série Barry Windsor-Smith: Storyteller, em formato tabloide.

A entrada de **GIL KANE** (1926-2000) no mundo dos quadrinhos foi interrompida pela 2ª Guerra Mundial, mas, ao retornar, o jovem artista rapidamente ascendeu para se tornar um dos principais artistas de sua geração. Na DC, Kane introduziu a Era de Prata dos super-heróis em *Lonterna Verde* e Átomo, enquanto na Marvel ocupou cargos influentes em *O Espetacular Homem-Aranho, Capitão Marvel* e *Warlock.* Sua criação, *Blackmark*, de 1971, é considerada uma das primeiras graphic novels, e ele continuou produzindo trabalhos cativantes até sua morte, em 2000.

JOHN BUSCEMA (1927-2002) literalmente escreveu o livro sobre ser um artista da Marvel — no caso, Como Desenhar Quadrinhos no Estilo Marvel —, e poucos eram mais qualificados do que ele. Sua carreira começou em 1948 como membro da redação Timely/Marvel. Ele trocou o campo pela área da publicidade em meados dos anos 1950, mas Stan Lee o levou de volta aos quadrinhos em 1966. Buscema seguiu uma fase célebre em Os Vingadores com a primeira série do Surfista Prateado. Posteriormente, sucedeu Jack Kirby em Quarteto Fantástico, Thor e outros títulos. Quando chegou à aposentadoria, em 1996, Buscema havia desenhado quase todos os títulos da Marvel — incluindo seu favorito. Conan, o Bárbaro.

NASCIDO NO CAMPO DE BATALHA!

AS AVENTURAS ORIGINAIS DE CONAN NA MARVEL PELAS MÃOS DE ROY THOMAS ESTÃO DE VOLTA, REMASTERIZADAS À TODA A GLÓRIA DAS CORES ORIGINAIS DA ARTE DO MESTRE BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH!



